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Reference: Anti-Influenza virus activities of commercial oregano oils and their carriers. Journal of Applied Pharmaceutical Science 2012; 02(07) 214-18.

Our special election issue

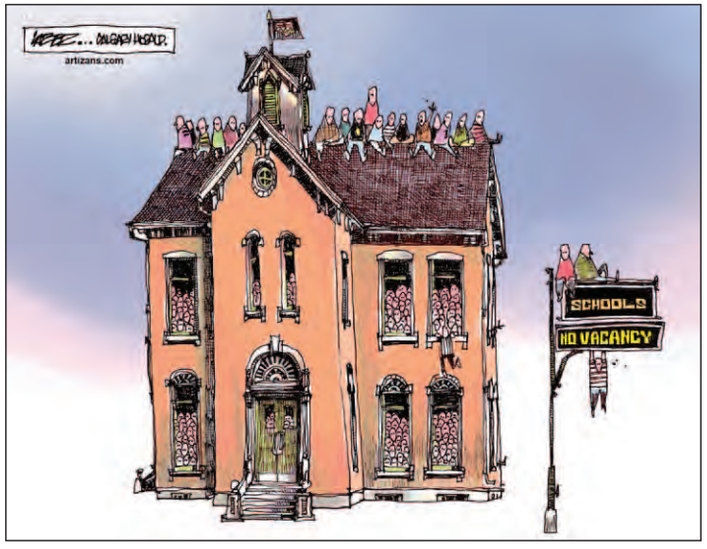
by Joseph Roberts,
Publisher and Founder (est. 1982)

"Many (governments) make a mistake, not only in giving too much power to the rich, but in attempting to overreach the people. There comes a time when out of a false good there arises a true evil, since the encroachments of the rich are more destructive to the state than those of the people." Aristotle / Politics

Modern apologists assert that arrogant politicians are generally of high moral character. That has yet to be seen in British Columbia's last 16 years. Millions of dollars, usually from tax payers, are used to prop up the deception that the government serves the best interest of the poor, and upholds democracy.

Martin Luther King Jr gave his riveting Riverside speech 50 years ago on the day I was writing this introduction. He said "A time comes where silence is betrayal." "That time has come for us…These are the times for real choices and not false ones."

He suggested five concrete steps that government must take, and named "the giant triplets of racism, extreme materialism, and militarism." Please listen to his compassionate sermon posted on our Facebook page.



Many closest to King called it the greatest speech of his life, telling the truth about their government, "refusing to give up the privileges and the pleasures that comes from the immense profits of overseas investment". A government who takes for their personal gain instead of giving to programs of social uplift is "approaching spiritual death."

In King's time, the US government was expanding its military invasion of Vietnam eight thousand miles away. Today, our government is selling BC's resources to the other side of the world at cut rate prices. Both are corrupt and only serve the very wealthy. There are big financial interests, oil and gas multinationals and land developers, seeking influence with their political donations. Large amouts of money have gone to the BC Liberals while they refused to discuss campaign finance reform seriously – until caught, and with an election pending. They had plenty of opportunities to support the campaign financing reform tabled by the NDP and Greens, but they constantly voted it down. To figure out who that serves, follow the money.

Common Ground's front cover lists five areas the BC government could have handled better, and each category starts with the letter "E" – representing the grade they deserve:

Education

Instead of negotiating in good faith with the BCTF, the Liberals wasted $50 million of tax money defending their amoral position in court for larger class sizes and school funding reductions. In parts of Surrey, if you now want your child to go to public kindergarten, there are not enough classrooms or teachers. So parent have to enter a lottery to "win" a seat in class for their child. Two high schools in Surrey have 500 students over their maximum capacity, so they have put teachers on shifts in order to double the class room availability. This is just one reason why teachers have been deeply concerned. If someone thinks education is expensive, try ignorance. The generations of students who have already passed through the underfunded school system have lost a precious chance for a better education.

Environment

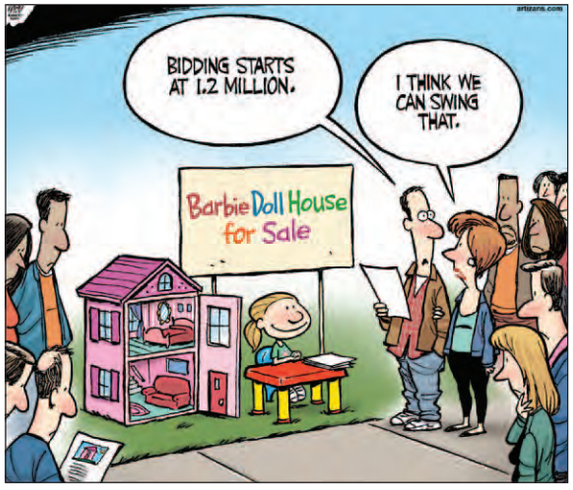
Exemplified by the largest mining dam disaster in Canadian history, where a billionaire shareholder generously donated to BC Liberals, as did Imperial Metal whose Mount Polley mining wastes poured into the pristine Quesnel Lake, upstream from rivers that flow into the Fraser River's salmon run. But that is just a start. You have Site C Dam, Kinder Morgan pipeline and Woodfibre LNG approved by Christy Clark's neoliberal government.

Economy

The economy is fake, the books are cooked. Bob Dylan said "money doesn't talk, it swears". We are told incessantly that somehow private greedy people will help out the public the most. When you look at the real numbers and not the cooked books for voter consumption, you realize that's a boldfaced lie. The NDP performed better.

Equality

Number one worst child poverty in Canada. Homelessness hot potatoes tossed back and forth between the various levels of government. The basic minimum wage needs to be raise to a living wage. Corruption paves the "trickle up" of money from the workers to the financial elite. Some make a big show about giving millions to various causes, seldom mentioning the tax deductions and insider trading for legislation or re-zone of their other properties.



Ethics

It seems unfair and unethical that the biggest media corporations align with Christy Clark – who in turn runs wall-to-wall ads attacking John Horgan the leader of the NDP. These media corporations are little different in principle from their corporate owners and venture capital masters. They are rewarded with massive advertising budgets from pro BC Hydro, pro Site C Dam, pro LNG, pro pipeline, pro venture capital, pro bank, pro mega developer interests. Notice how Christy gets all the major attention, while John Hogan has been blacklisted or ignored. Many people do not even know his name, so *Common Ground* decided to interview him to find out who he is, and even more importantly, what he stands for.

Martin Luther King Jr ended his speech that day 50 years ago with lines which still echo: "If we will make the right choice, we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our world into a beautiful symphony… We will be able to speed up the day…all over the world, when "justice will roll down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream."

Here is a lesser known writer whose words also ring true today. And for BC.s sake and the sake of future generations, vote to make BC a better place for the 99 percent on May 9.

"These tremendous powers have been wielded with such a lack of scientific or financial skill, and in so narrow and selfish a spirit, that its arbiters have repeatedly plunged the commercial world into bankruptcy, and confiscated or inequitably redistributed its accumulated earnings, either for their own benefit or else to save themselves from the effects of their own blundering."
– Alexander Del Mar

common ground

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John Horgan

Meet the leader who would be BC's Premier

by Bruce Mason

Common Ground: Counting down to a provincial election BC is awash in attack ads and you've got a bull's eye on you. How do you respond?

John Horgan: You've hit the nail on the head. BC Liberals are spending $20m of taxpayers' money and not talking about things that matter to people, about the services neglected for 16 years. For example, services for seniors. Nine out of 10 care homes don't have resources for

> I believe we are among the most blessed people on the planet to live in British Columbia. All we need is a government that's working every day for the people who live here.

minimum staffing levels. That strikes me as a failure. Nine hundred people died from opioid-related overdoses last year, also a failure. Yet the government is taking our public wealth and promoting themselves.

On top of that, we've got the most well-funded corporate party ever in BC. The Liberals rake in enormous amounts of money from the corporate sector and we've been asking over the past 10 years to get big money out of politics. Case in point: the creators of feel-good advertisements, the Pace Group, got $23 million in government contracts as they were donating to the BC Liberals. To me, an obvious conflict, but not to the premier.

CG: With few opportunities for debate and the legislature, basically part-time, would you like a leadership debate?

JH: I believe it's being negotiated now. The more important issue is our democracy and institutions; it was 200 days between sittings. Last fall, there were cobwebs in the legislature, rather than people representing BC communities. But the Liberals prefer to make decisions behind closed doors in a clandestine way and claim only they have answers to our problems. Whenever a government believes only they know best, that's the time to throw them to the curb.

CG: Are fear-mongering attack ads really just the voice of the wealthiest 10%?

JH: My approach has been to let them throw the mud and hold the government accountable. If they think they're getting a free ride, they're sadly mistaken. I'm going to talk about yesterday and, more importantly, what are we going to do tomorrow?

CG: This is a very important election with a deeply divided electorate, along traditional right/left lines, rural vs. urban, between environmentalists and people who stress jobs, millennials and seniors. How will you bridge these?

JH: You've identified the challenge. I'm a born-and-raised British Columbian, had good fortune as an MLA for over a decade, to criss-cross BC, talking to people about the environment and economy. Everyone recognizes you can't separate the two. If you don't have an environment, you won't have an economy. And you need to make sure that economy is working for everybody, not just the select few.

That means ensuring, for example, forestry, a foundational BC industry. I worked in the Ocean Falls pulp mill many years ago, helped pay for my education with a good-paying job. There's 150 fewer mills today than in 2001; 30,000 fewer people working in the forests, and we've never exported more raw logs than we did last November.

In forest-dependent communities, or in downtown Vancouver, people ask why resources that belong to all of us, our natural heritage, are given away to large tenure-holders to do with as they will? Those types of things *continued p.28…*

Opportunity for real change

He says he's a regular guy who's lived at the end of the street for 25 years, and he's gotten to know his neighbours well. He's raised two sons with Ellie, his wife of 33 years. He's also a cancer survivor.

Far too many people still don't know his name, let alone what he stands for.

John Horgan – Juan de Fuca MLA and NDP Provincial Party leader – often parks his Prius to ride the #61 bus from the Legislature to Sooke, a one-hour and 40 minute, animated, intimate journey home. He calls it his "mobile town-hall, with constituents."

> The man I met is as rock-solid as his warm handshake, quick-footed in his encyclopaedic grasp of issues and clear-eyed in his perspective on real-life problems and solutions.

He's Irish, a talker who likes to laugh, but who also listens intensely. His eyes glint passion and hint anger at BC Liberals. "They're arrogant, they're smug, they believe everything they say and do is correct, a real danger in a democratic society. After 16 years of failure, it's time for real change."

Personally, I'm hopeful John Horgan will head a new government, based primarily on a fast-paced, jam-packed, in-depth interview that stands out in my 35+ years in journalism. "Who's the BC NDP leader?" "What's John Horgan stand for?" The answers are easy and surprising, especially if you shut off widespread cynicism. Suspend false impressions from shameful, corrupt multimillion-dollar government and attack ads. *continued p.23…*

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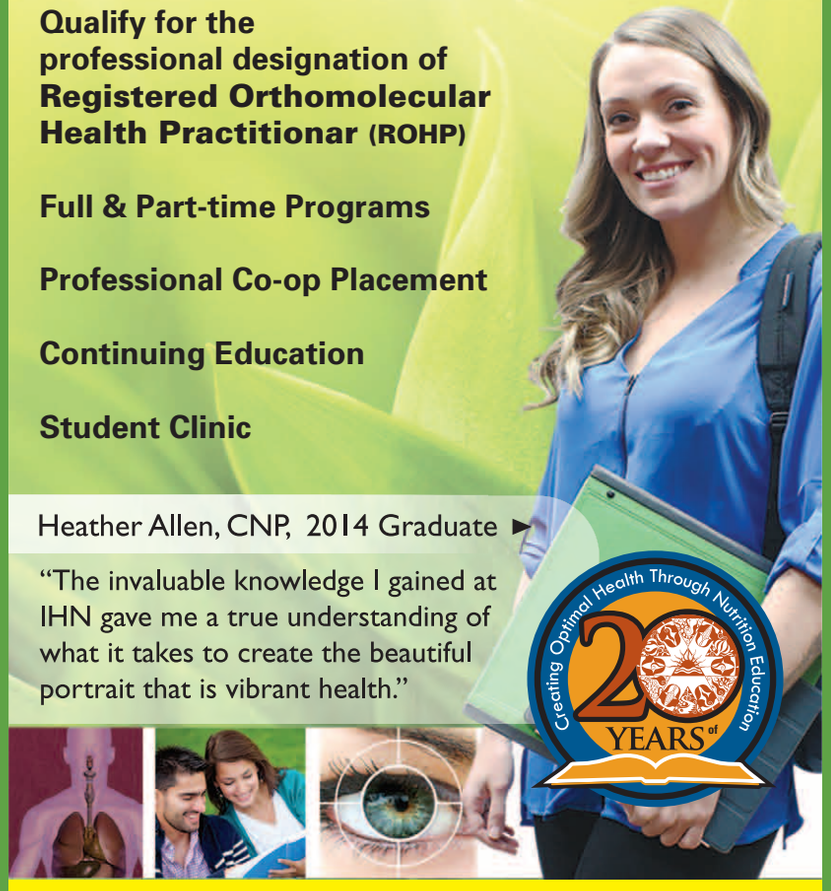

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Say cheese!

The significant health hazards associated with red meat are so well known by now that people are happy to avoid the Neu5Gc (*N*-Glycolylneuraminic acid) present in all beef, pork and lamb that increases risk of tumour formation. We also know that the gut microbiota of meat eaters change carnitine in meats to the toxic TMAO (trimethylamine *N*-oxide), increasing the risk of cardiovascular disease, including early atherosclerosis and stroke.

Many people can be heard to say, "I'd love to go vegan, but I could *never* give up cheese." Cheeses bring a wealth of flavour to menus and their textures have wide appeal, but until recently, plant-based cheese replacements have been a pretty dismal lot. But this situation has changed, and for the better.

It turns out the flavour development so fundamental to cheese-making depends not on cow's milk, but on the culturing process. Thus, a variety of entrepreneurs are using non-dairy milks, such as cashew milk, as a foundation and producing amazing products. Miyoko's extensive line of cheeses (available through www.vegansupply.ca) is a bit pricey, but the Smoked Farmhouse, Sundried Tomato Garlic, Herbes de Provence and many others will change your perspective in a very positive direction. This website has many other tasty options, too.

A variety of entrepreneurs are using non-dairy milks, such as cashew milk, as a foundation…producing amazing products.

One local company that has made good across North America is Burnaby-based Daiya. Their products are affordable and widely available in mainstream supermarkets. Their Pepperjack and other flavours provide superb meltable toppings for plant-based pizzas. One great favourite is their Key Lime Cheezecake. For others, see daiyafoods.com

Karen McAthy's book, *The Art of Plant-Based Cheesemaking* (New Society Publishers), will be released on April 25. This BC author helps do-it-yourself cheesemakers understand the process of culturing and fermenting the ingredients that form a top-quality product and provides recipes for quick, or more lengthy, production methods.

People may wonder why anyone making compassion a key feature of their dietary choices would want to avoid dairy products. After all, doesn't a cow just give milk and we humans can enjoy the excess? It turns out that cows give milk specifically in response to being impregnated and then giving birth, an entirely natural process. The forced separation of dairy cow and her young is far from natural; it involves extensive suffering for mother cow and for her calf. If her calf is female, this calf can be turned into a repeatedly impregnated milk producer. In contrast, male calves typically become veal at a young age. And when the dairy cow's productivity slows, she too heads down the slaughterhouse line to be turned into burgers.

For decades, Canada's food guides have featured "Milk and Milk Products" as essential foods. The most recent version allows for one alternative: fortified soymilk. But a food guide that ignores the fact that the majority of the world's population has some degree of lactose intolerance is hardly suitable for our multicultural population.

Alternative substitutes for dairy products can provide the same nutrients as dairy products, without the animal abuse. Humans have no requirement for cow's milk or its products so start exploring the immense and expanding range of dairy alternatives.

Vesanto Melina is a registered dietitian in Vancouver and a co-author of award winning books on plant-based nutrition. www.nutrispeak.com, www.becomingvegan.ca

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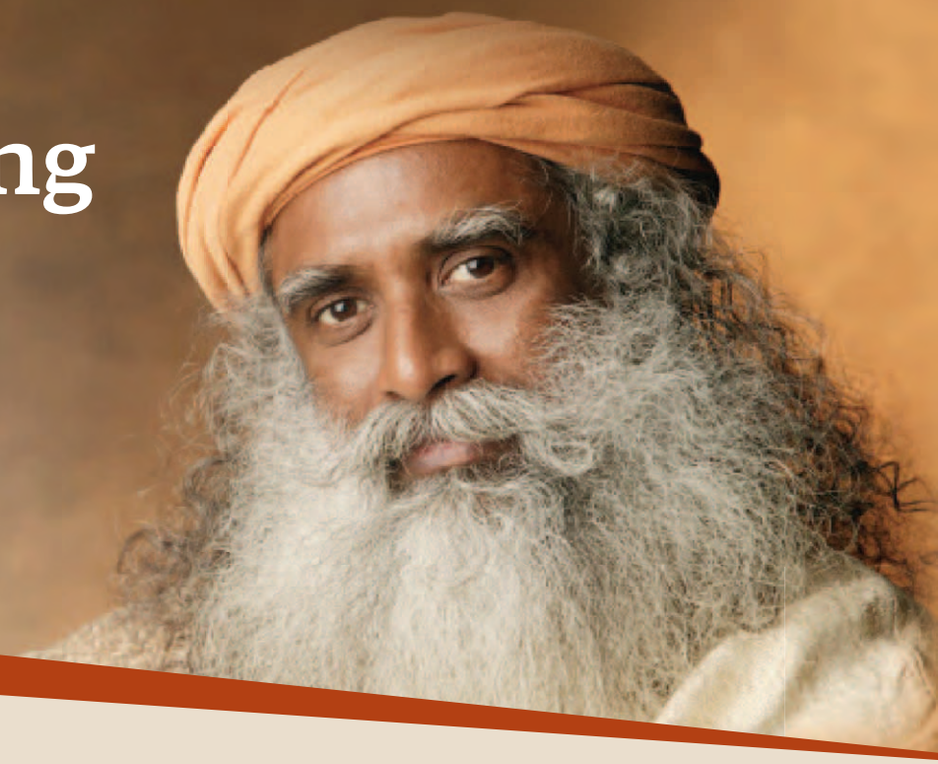

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Glyphosate's hidden health risks

compiled by Jasmin Schellenberg

The government calls it safe, but studies show it shouldn't be used at all. Dr. Don Huber, Dr Stephanie Seneff, Anthony Samsel and Nancy Swanson found alarming correlations, in a list of over 30 human debilitating diseases, with the increased use of glyphosate, the active ingredient in Monsanto's herbicide Roundup, and the increased prevalence of genetically engineered proteins in our food.

> Human proteins contaminated with glyphosate don't work properly.

USDA administrators are unable to show any evidence of the safety of GMO (Genetically Modified Organism) crops, though the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) doubled the amount of glyphosate allowed in food. Soybean oil is now allowed to contain 400 times the limit at which it can impact your health.

Glyphosate is not *just* an herbicide. It was originally patented as a mineral chelator. It immobilizes nutrients, making them unavailable in the body. It's also patented as a potent antibiotic that can devastate human gut bacteria. Governments in Canada have clearcut areas sprayed with glyphosate. In BC, 10,000 hectares of publically owned land are sprayed with glyphosate every year.

Dr. Seneff strongly suspects that glyphosate is getting into proteins by mistake in place of glycine. This has huge consequences to our health because the human proteins contaminated with glyphosate don't work properly in their function in the body, and the glyphosate- contaminated food proteins tend to resist proteolysis, sticking around and causing autoimmune disease through molecular mimicry. This explains the epidemic in allergies to foods likely to contain high amounts of glyphosate contamination, such as gluten, casein and soy.

One molecule we can predict to be severely affected by glyphosate substitution for glycine is collagen, the most abundant protein in the body. Collagen is essential for cushioning the joints. Glyphosate contamination causes it to perform poorly, leading to joint pain and tendonitis, among other things. This explains why so many people suffer from chronic pain conditions, such as shoulder and back pain and why we have an epidemic in opioid drug abuse. Foods with high amounts of gelatin can be expected to be highly contaminated with glyphosate, including bone broth, ordinarily very nutritious. One must also consider the implications of glyphosate contamination in gel capsules.

Probably the most ominous consequence of glyphosate contamination in collagen is the implications it has for vaccines. Vaccines are injected directly into the body past all the normal barriers and this makes any toxic ingredient in the vaccine very problematic. MMR vaccine, in particular, was found to have much higher levels of glyphosate than other vaccines and this may well explain the association between MMR and autism that shows up in the VAERS (Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System) database.

Adverse reactions to MMR are much more severe today than they were in the '90s when much less glyphosate was used on core crops. Dr. Seneff notes that, if nothing changes, we will have a one-to-one ratio of healthy to autistic children by 2032.

Do not use herbicides in your garden and avoid all GMO foods. Replace with organically grown products, vegetables and meats.

Compiled by **Jasmin Schellenberg**, www.pasture-to-plate.com Sources: **Nourishing Traditions** by Sally Fallon, www.westonaprice.org and and Dr. Stephanie Seneff. Visit www.pasture-to-plate.com or www.thegreengazette.ca for "Nourishing our Children" newsletters.

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Vote as if the environment mattered

by Theresa Beer

Imagine if environmental issues dominated BC's election in May. Typically, the environment gets brought up as an afterthought or is relegated to a separate forum for discussion. Yet how we treat the environment affects every British Columbian, in much the same way that health care and education do. Without a healthy environment, economic opportunities, for example, will be heavily curtailed.

Here's an idea: political parties could base all their policies on the principle of operating within the bounds of nature. This would lead to a different discussion about meaningful jobs and health care, education and housing priorities. That's why, during the election, the David Suzuki Foundation will be watching what parties say about climate, transit, oceans, grizzlies and the right to a healthy environment.

> An environmental bill of rights would put more power in the hands of citizens by ensuring greater transparency.

On the climate front, parties should put forward detailed plans on how they would meet emissions targets. We're looking for parties to offer policies that would raise the carbon tax each year beyond 2022 and apply it to more sectors. An effective and gradually increasing carbon tax provides incentives to switch to low-carbon energy solutions and fosters innovation and economic competitiveness. We believe it's time to reinstate predictable, annual increases to the carbon tax to provide industry with a stable market signal to reduce emissions.

In terms of transit spending, the Foundation is encouraging the next BC government to commit to funding 40 percent of the cost for new public transit infrastructure. Metro Vancouver is gridlocked and transportation accounts for 25 percent of BC's carbon emissions. Congestion costs in Metro Vancouver alone are estimated by the C.D. Howe Institute and Clean Energy Canada at between $500 million and $1.2 billion a year. Political leaders must prioritize and fund transit to address population growth, health, environment and the economy. Adequately funding transit improvements is one of our most effective ways to address climate change. Support for the Mayors' Council Transit plan is a good place to start. This is an achievable, costed and regionally considered plan to get Metro Vancouver out of gridlock.

As one way to meet our province's legislated emissions targets, we'd like to see parties introduce plans to accurately measure fugitive emissions from liquefied natural gas production and cut those emissions by 45 percent. The Climate Leadership Team crafted recommendations that put us on the right course for climate action. They would be a strong starting point for parties to support climate solutions.

One of the most powerful ways we can move to living within the bounds of nature is to support healthy and productive oceans. The Foundation urges parties in this provincial election to commit to working with the Federal Government and First Nations to implement and budget for marine planning and a network of marine protected areas. During a tour of coastal communities, we heard serious concerns about the impacts of climate change, fossil fuel shipping and pipelines, pollution and industrial fisheries. Residents told us that ocean management decisions must recognize healthy ecosystems as the basis for healthy communities. To meet these and other biodiversity goals, we are asking parties to commit to reforming regulations and laws to better protect coastal ecosystems and species at risk such as southern resident orcas.

We're also calling on all parties to support an immediate ban of BC's grizzly bear trophy hunt. We recommend that the ban avoid loopholes, such as the continuation of the ability to hunt grizzly bears for meat. The Foundation supports regulations that make it illegal to remove, sell, traffic or trade in any grizzly bear trophy items. British Columbians overwhelmingly support ending the grizzly trophy hunt.

The right to a healthy environment is the simple, yet powerful, idea that everyone in Canada has the human right to clean air and water, safe food, a stable climate and a say in decisions that affect their health and well-being. Ontario passed their environmental bill of rights in 1993 and Quebec included the right to a healthy environment in its Environmental Quality Act in 1978. We believe it's time that BC joined them, and others agree. The Union of BC Municipalities, for example, passed a resolution in 2015 calling for provincial environmental rights legislation. Passing an environmental bill of rights would mean that projects such as the Kinder Morgan pipeline expansion would receive greater scrutiny given their impact on the environment.

An environmental bill of rights would put more power in the hands of citizens by ensuring greater transparency and participation in environmental decision-making, which could help balance a system that is heavily influenced by corporate lobbying.

Regardless of the issues under discussion, our hope is that environmentally minded people in BC will get out and vote on May 9. See you at the polls.

Theresa Beer is senior communications specialist at the David Suzuki Foundation, www.davidsuzuki.org

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Which party has your back?

Regarding health, there are stark contrasts between the BC Liberals and the NDP

Let us say to the people not 'How much have you got?' but 'How best can we serve you?'

– Dr. Norman Bethune

An election is looming and this may be one of the most crucial turning points in our province's history. The market for prescription drugs is worth about $4 billion in annual spending in BC, and the way governments set policies around prescription drug approval, coverage and safety are vital to all of our futures. So the question is "Who do you trust?"

Below are six insights I've gathered over the last 23 years of watching provincial pharmaceutical policy, under both the NDP and Liberal governments. You may want to think of these when you step into the voting booth on May 9.

1. Evidence: When the NDP formed government in the early '90s, it was notable in how quickly they fostered a culture of evidence based policymaking at the Ministry of Health. They established an independent drug watchdog (UBC's Therapeutics Initiative) and made sure science based decisions were going to undergird provincial drug coverage decisions. When the Liberals took power 16 years ago, they started to erode that base almost immediately, appointing drug industry lobbyists to oversee a panel on Pharmacare reform, sidelining the Therapeutics Initiative and ramping up the pharmaceutical industry's involvement in drug coverage decisions. The quality of pharmaceutical governance under the BC Liberals, concerning approval, monitoring and safety of prescription drugs, has been an epic failure, and is the best way to explain why BC leads the country in opioid deaths.

2. Lobbying: Under the NDP, you almost never saw drug lobbyists wandering the halls of the Ministry of Health. Back in the '90s, the head of Pharmacare forbade his staff from meeting with them. The noticeable absence of pharmaceutical reps in the apparatus of government meant the ministry could get on with its job, unbefuddled by marketing messages and lobbying pressures. What a contrast to today where the BC Liberals have kicked open the door and invited industry officials, their experts and their funded patient reps right into the heart of government. The result? Even though the Liberals spout the aphorisms of evidence based policymaking, we can't avoid watching a steady stream of often useless and expensive medicines being approved for coverage, and wasteful health spending decisions that may please Big Pharma's lobbyist donors, but deliver little impact on public health.

3. Drug research: Under the NDP, BC established an internationally recognized cohort of independent drug policy researchers who studied changes in drug coverage policies, such as Reference-Based Pricing, which was responsible for eliminating much waste in the system. We studied the safety of drugs for acne (which cause birth defects), smoking cessation products (which cause psychiatric episodes) and drugs for ADHD (which are inappropriately prescribed), yet the message was loud and clear. The Liberals and their "partners" in the pharmaceutical industry didn't want any independent research sullying their brands and most of that independent research was killed during the Health Ministry firing scandal in 2012. Meanwhile, millions in funding was ponied up for UBC's Centre for Drug Research and Development designed to recycle our tax dollars into commercially viable products for private companies.

4. "Patient" groups: From the '90s onward, I remember seeing groups, such as the Osteoporosis Society, the BC Alzheimer's Society and assorted astroturf patient groups, viciously attack the NDP. While patient groups can do good work for the diseases they represent, because so many of them are soaking in Big Pharma funding, they found allies in the Liberals. When the BC Liberals took office and warmly invited these patient groups into consul-

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tations and asked for their opinions about the latest pharmaceuticals, they were made to feel special. Sadly, the fine folks at BC Pharmacare who feel they are genuinely working in the public interest have been silently worn down by a steady stream of industry funded opinions and the drug-addled patient groups just make things worse.

5. Transparency: Under NDP premier Mike Harcourt, BC produced "model legislation for access to information," according to the *Vancouver Sun's* Vaughn Palmer. Palmer is certainly one who knows what a farce it is trying to access government documents through Freedom of Information (FOI). Hiding misdeeds from the public has become high art under the Liberals where politicians and bureaucrats routinely omit to write things down, use personal email or cell phones and "triple delete" to avoid anyone learning about government business. This corruption helps to partly explain why drug coverage decisions are often suspect and how the mysterious health firing scandal from 2012 remains the most expensive scandal in the BC Ministry of Health's history.

BC's Ombudsman may soon release his report on who called in the drone strike on the Health Ministry, resulting in the firing of eight drug safety researchers and millions of dollars of associated costs. Don't tell me that the influence of pharmaceutical companies, many of which donate to the political BC Liberal Party, may not have wanted their products independently analyzed by those researchers. One of them, Rod MacIsaac, committed suicide before he could complete a study on Pfizer's controversial smoking cessation drug. And yes, Pfizer, one of the world's biggest pharmaceutical companies, has multiple ties to people within the BC Liberals. *Quelle* surprise!

The BC Liberals have, for the last 16 years, shown their capacity to be tainted by drug industry messages, lobbyists and donations.

6. Wastebusting: One thing I noticed under the BC NDP's culture of evidence based drug decision-making was a commitment to reduce waste. Not all new prescription products coming to market (happening all the time) are going to be worthy of coverage. Paying for the most expensive newer medicines, which aren't any more effective or safer than those currently covered, only benefits the manufacturers. The BC Liberals have eroded this culture of wastebusting, allowing itself to be swindled on million-dollar drug coverage decisions. Is this because they've spent too much time cozying up to the drug companies and listening to the entreaties of officials, lobbyists and patient groups? Suffice to say every dollar spent on a useless, unnecessary drug is a dollar that isn't going to be used where it is actually needed in the healthcare system. The Liberals don't get this, while the NDP, in my opinion, always did.

Finally, when it comes to elections and political discussion, we all need to talk about what underpins health coverage decisions. Is it the needs of manufacturers and their armies of lobbyists? A conservative estimate would say we waste about $10 billion per year on what are sometimes unnecessary, useless or potentially harmful medicines, diagnostic tests and procedures. Every single person working in the health system has seen this shameful waste, yet the independent analysis and research needed to keep people from taking harmful drugs or useless tests no longer exists under the Liberals.

If a new government were to start by eliminating the pharmaceutical corruption of our health decision making, we'd be able to spend millions more on what is actually needed: more affordable drugs, better care for seniors, thorough homecare, manageable childcare and getting serious about affordable housing in BC. Let's be clear, Alan Cassels is not about sticking it to the pharmaceutical industry. I'm about defeating waste because much of the money we send to the drug companies isn't being used where it needs to be.

The BC Liberals have, for the last 16 years, shown their capacity to be tainted by drug industry messages, lobbyists and donations. At the end of the day, we need clean, clear health decisions as urgently as we need clean, clear water.

That's what I think, but what do you think? Visit my website www.alancassels.com and answer my survey. Or tweet me at @AKECassels and put this in the tweet: #healthcarewastebusting Tell me what we need to do to make BC's drug coverage affordable and appropriate. We need a dialogue on avoiding waste and I need your voices.

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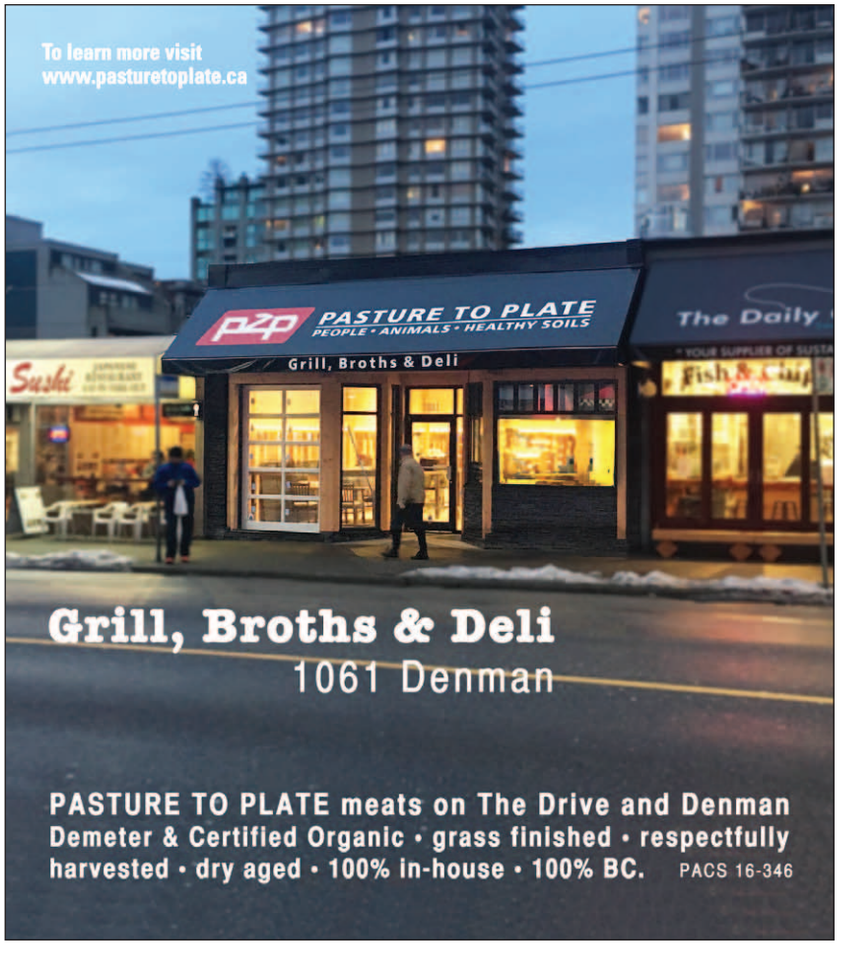
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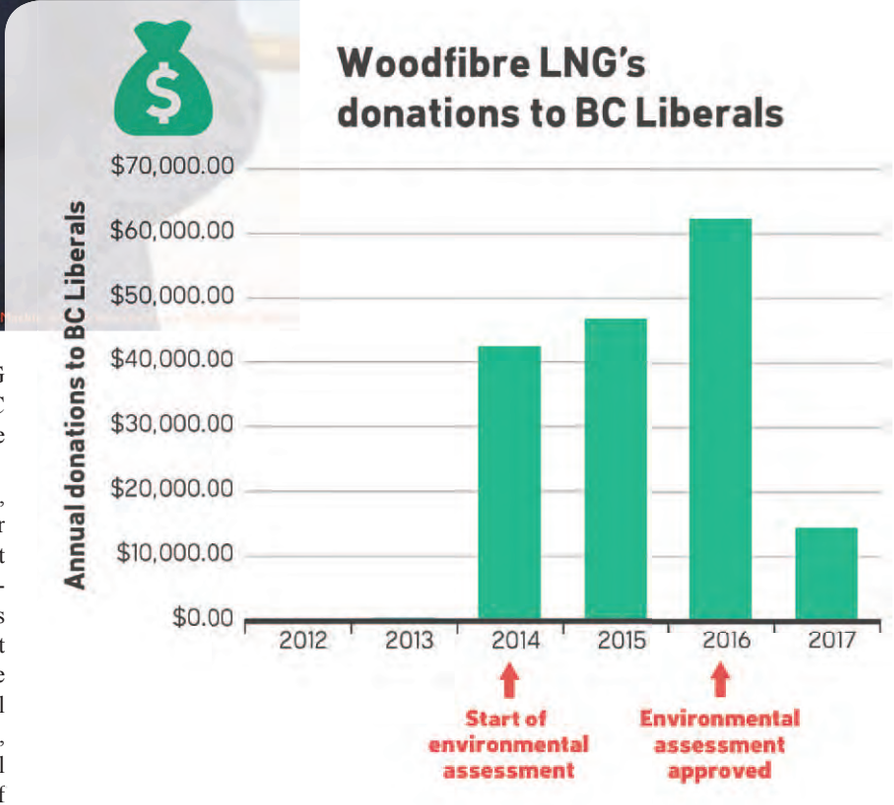
Policy payola?

by Tracey Saxby

BC Liberals linked to illegal donations from Woodfibre LNG for political favours

Woodfibre LNG owner Sukanto Tanoto with Rich Coleman, BC Minister of Natural Gas. Photo obtained by theBreaker.news via FOI (Freedom of Information).



The BC Liberals are under investigation by Elections BC and the RCMP after the *Globe and Mail* revealed the party is accepting illegal donations from lobbyists, highlighting donations by Byng Giraud and Marian Ngo from Woodfibre LNG.

This latest scandal is simply "business as usual" for Woodfibre LNG, which is owned by the notorious Indonesian billionaire, Sukanto Tanoto, whose companies have a history of tax evasion, animal rights violations and human rights offences. And let's not forget that Woodfibre LNG vice-president Byng Giraud, who has been linked to a robo-call scandal, formerly worked for Imperial Metals, the company responsible for the Mount Polley mining disaster. Nice guys.

But the scandal prompted us to dig a little deeper: when did Woodfibre LNG start donating to the BC Liberals? How much have they donated?

Since 2013, to date, Woodfibre LNG and their staff have donated at least $166,934 to the BC Liberal Party. The donations start to ramp up almost immediately after the substituted environmental assessment was approved, putting the Provincial Government in charge of conducting the environmental assessment on behalf of the Federal Government. Never mind that the BC Minister of Natural Gas Development, Rich Coleman, who was responsible for reviewing the environmental and social impacts of Woodfibre LNG, also has a mandate to develop an LNG export industry. Let's ignore that conflict of interest.

There was a flurry of donations right about the time the BC Liberals unveiled Bill 6, the LNG Income Tax Act, which halved the tax on LNG export facilities to 3.5% on net income. This means BC now bears all the risk and no reward, as profits may never be realized.

The donations continued over the summer of 2015, leading up to the inevitable rubber stamp approval of Woodfibre LNG's environmental assessment certificate by Ministers Coleman and Polak. No surprises there.

The donations kept on pouring into BC Liberal

coffers, with some of the biggest donations in late 2016, right about the time Rich Coleman flew to Singapore to meet with Sukanto Tanoto. They signed an MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) that the BC Liberals have refused to release to the public, and posed for a photo. A few weeks later, Premier Christy Clark helicoptered in to the Woodfibre LNG site, to put on a hard hat and announce to media fanfare, "Woodfibre LNG is a go" thanks to a new e-Drive subsidy worth $34-45 million every year. By the way, your hydro bill will go up so Woodfibre LNG can have cheap power.

There was a flurry of donations right about the time the BC Liberals unveiled the LNG Income Tax Act, which halved the tax on LNG export facilities.

And still the donations kept coming, as Woodfibre LNG now has to apply for an amendment to their environmental assessment certificate. Oh, and there's another tax break as the BC Liberals eliminated PST on clean energy purchases (including LNG) in February 2017.

That's a pretty good return on $166,934.

Has big money corrupted the environmental assessment process? Has Woodfibre LNG bought a rubber stamp approval for the project, along with other political favours including tax breaks, tax exemptions, and the e-Drive subsidy? It sure doesn't look good.

Tracey Saxby is co-founder of My Sea to Sky, an organization started by a group of Squamish citizens in March 2014, in response to growing concerns about the proposed Woodfibre LNG project. Take action at www.myseatosky.org

Christy Clark is working for her rich donors.

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Mac McLaughlin

StarWise

April 2017

One ship drives east and another drives west, with the selfsame winds that blow. Tis the set of the sails and not the gales which tells us the way to go. Like the winds of the seas are the ways of fate as we voyage along through life. Tis the set of the soul that decides its goal and not the calm or the strife. – Ella Wheeler Wilcox

GOTTA LOVE that quote. We can apply it to our own lives and we can certainly apply it to the stars and planets as they drive us onward towards our fate and destiny. We elect the politicians and hope they are steering our ship properly. It hardly ever works out that way, though, and we usually end up very disappointed with their leadership and behaviour. We groan, whine and complain and everything remains the same. The rich get richer and the rest of us keep grinding out a living and then we die.

"Tis the set of the soul that decides its goal and not the calm or the strife." Here we are in the Kali Yuga, aka the Iron Age. Is there high stress? Yes. Are we living in dangerous times with all the nuclear weapons and other nasty devices we have created to wipe out the bad guys (whomever they are)? Yes. I'd like to write about how nice it will be in a few years when the planets change their positions, but I think the maladies we suffer from are going to be around for quite some time. Yet, however seemingly hopeless, it is not, especially if we set our soul on its right course and proper journey.

What we really need is a revolution in consciousness. The human spirit is truly something great. Look what Mahatma Gandhi did, but, of course, we killed him for it. But that's not the point. It's not how we die, but how we live that makes the real difference. Pluto, the planet of regeneration and transformation will be in Capricorn (ruling governments) for seven more years, then Aquarius (ruling social awareness) for 20 more, and Pisces (ruling spirituality) past the mid-century point. We have a great opportunity to reshape the landscape, politically, socially and spiritually. We have free will of choice. Through calm or strife, if we are centred and balanced within ourselves, that within itself will make a huge difference. There's plenty of land and food to go around to feed everyone on the planet. The plan starts with you, as you learn to live a nonviolent, loving and giving lifestyle.

Mac McLaughlin has been a practising, professional astrologer for more than four decades. His popular **Straight Stars** column ran in Vancouver's largest weekly newspaper for 11 years. Email mac@macsstars.com or call 604-731-1109.

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ARIES Mar 21 - Apr 19
An internal and spiritual change is happening. Can you feel it? You probably sense it and know it. Now, you just got to get with it and live your truth. The full Moon on April 10 will shine some light on your situation. You can't stand untruth; now it's time to do something about it.

TAURUS Apr 20 - May 21
It's time to rework the plan. Taurus always has a plan, a scheme or a dream they continually work towards. April offers up a time to rethink everything and with Mars moving through Taurus, you will be provided with the courage and determination to forge a new pathway. Make it a worthy endeavour.

GEMINI May 22 - Jun 20
Many Gemini have been blown off course and scattered to the winds in the last few years. Life has wrought all kinds of big changes. Not necessarily negative, but probably daunting. The obvious remedy is to jump right in and create what you can. Start by eliminating what is not worthy, useful or productive.

CANCER Jun 21 - Jul 22
Career and family sectors of your chart are highly activated. Plus, you are being reshaped, chiselled and reformed in some fashion. Some losses are indicated and you may have to put the past away and look towards the future. Spiritual values and lofty aspirations help define what it is you are truly after.

LEO Jul 23 - Aug 22
Travel and career are foremost on your mind. Writing and education are other features these days. All well and good, nice things to do and think about. But is it enough? Probably not, especially if you are hungry for some divinity and spirituality. All attainments will seem hollow if you haven't done any spiritual work on yourself.

VIRGO Aug 23 - Sep 22
Romance and finance are big topics now. You got a glow on that others are attracted towards. On the financial end of things, it might be about how to make it all work. Basically, there's good energy happening. It's really about values and ethics and what will truly make you happy.The answers lie within.

LIBRA Sep 23 - Oct 22
The Libra full Moon on April 10 will illuminate what truly needs attention and action. Famous for indecisiveness, you will be prodded into making decisions. Watch for over-reaching and over-doing anything. Jupiter's generosity and vision help you see the big picture. Timing and destiny meet up now.

SCORPIO Oct 23 - Nov 21
It's time to get all your ducks in a row. Strangely, you may be in position to benefit from other's misfortunes. Plus, you have the power to conquer enemies. Sometimes, it's the enemies within that do us in. All kinds of contrasting scenarios take shape now. Kindness, consideration and diplomacy win the day. The heat is on.

SAGITTARIUS Nov 22 - Dec 21
You may be humming the tune, "I owe, I owe, it's off to work I go." It's true; we're here to work off our indebtedness in order to be free of the harness and bit. Bite the bit or the bullet and settle up the accounts. A big relief comes once it's done.

CAPRICORN Dec 22 - Jan 19
What you covet and desire so deeply today may turn out to be the albatross around your neck a few years from now. Desiring less is best, for what is meant to come our way will come anyway. Spiritual emancipation and freedom is the true target to shoot for. It's the only mountain worthy of climbing.

AQUARIUS Jan 20 - Feb 19
You may be rummaging around in the recesses of your psyche wondering just what to do about your present predicament. Answers may come as the Moon moves through Aquarius from April 19 to 21. Follow your instincts as they won't let you down. There is planetary inspiration and support. Unique resolutions manifest soon.

PISCES Feb 20 - Mar 20
Venus visits all month. She is able to wield her power and wisdom easily. Creative energies are high and cupid's arrow may find its mark. Step it up and step out the door. Your vibe is bright and others want to know what you're all about. Have no shame in your game and give freely.

Where do we go from here?

At one time we had wisdom, but little knowledge. Now, we have a great deal of knowledge, but do we have enough wisdom to deal with that knowledge? – Jonas Salk

A number of months ago, there was a story in the news about a family who lost their lives in a cottage fire. I felt sad about this tragedy as I do whenever I hear such stories. A couple of days after the family was identified, I received an email from my daughter saying the father was one of her husband's best friends. The couple had been at their wedding in May and my daughter and her husband had spent time in that very cottage in August. It was a beautiful family; a successful couple both involved with and contributing to their community.

Suddenly, it was no longer just a news story and I tried not to think about their last moments. What a horrific shock to friends, family and their community. Now that I had a context for the news story, the sadness would not go away. It kept replaying in my mind. It was no longer like a photograph; it was now a streaming video. I I felt the weight of the pain and loss that was touching so many. Some wounds never really heal.

Transcending ego and embracing wisdom is the next step in human evolution.

I then began thinking of all the scenes I had witnessed around the destruction in Syria. Parents losing children, children losing parents, families losing everything. I always felt compassion, but I wanted to turn away because it was so horrible for them. In war-torn countries, the pain is constant and ongoing; those deaths are not *accidents.* It is humans intentionally taking the lives of other humans. Like the loss of that Canadian family multiplied hundreds of thousands of times.

Has the world gone mad? Why can't we do anything to stop it? Is the dark side of humanity getting darker? There is no cosmic parent who is going to step in and admonish the species to stop fighting and just get along.

The answer may lie in quantum theory: the notion that we (and everything else) are part of a gigantic energy field. What happens in one part affects the other parts no matter how far away and disconnected they may be. What is playing out on a global level is just a magnified version of what plays out in relationships and communities.

The ego motivations are the same: the desire to win, to overpower, to have more and the inability to see things from another's perspective, to transcend differences and work together to find solutions.

Back in the '70s, Jonas Salk wrote a book called *The Survival of the Wisest*. Wisdom here meant collaboration, cooperation and finding win/win solutions as opposed to aggressiveness and force. In my book, *Growing Into Soul*, I write that transcending ego and embracing wisdom is the next step in human evolution. Salk spoke in terms of counter-evolutionary and pro-evolutionary thoughts and behaviour.

Sadly, it seems we are seeing more and more counter-evolutionary behaviour in our world. The only solution is to begin, at the individual level, to act and speak wisely and model pro-evolutionary behaviour to our children and those around us. If an electron can alter the spin of another, though very far away, we can alter our "spin" and so influence the whole energy field in which we exist.

Gwen Randall-Young is an author and psychotherapist in private practice. For articles and information about her books, "Deep Powerful Change" hypnosis CDs and "Creating Effective Relationships" series, visit www.gwen.ca 'Like' Gwen on Facebook for daily inspiration.

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How big money corrupts politics

BC's Wild West of campaign funding needs reform

by Elizabeth Murphy

The provincial government has jurisdiction over election rules for both the province and municipalities. Here in BC, the wild west of campaign fundraising, provincial and municipal campaign finance rules are currently among the least accountable in Canada. This has been a huge problem for decades and will not change until the province takes action. The British Columbia provincial election on May 9 brings an opportunity to raise the issue of big money in politics and campaign finance reform.

Large donations and cash for access to candidates (often from vested interests) are standard practice with multi-million dollar campaigns. We are becoming the equivalent of a banana republic as globalized capital increasingly influences our governance.

Having the regulators funded by those they regulate is a form of systemic corruption. Limits on individual donations and banning corporate, union and foreign contributions are standard practices in many provinces and at the federal level. But not in BC. Here, at both the provincial and municipal levels, few restrictions exist and existing rules are often ignored.

The *Vancouver Sun* reported that, from 2005 to the first few weeks of 2017, of the corporate donations to the BC Liberals, the largest group among the top donors are property developers, with 21 of the top 50. Condo marketer Bob Rennie was the BC Liberal's head fundraiser up to January 2017, leaving the party well funded for the May 9th election. Rennie has also been a prominent supporter and fundraiser for Vancouver's ruling party, Vision Vancouver and Mayor Gregor Robertson.

These developers include the Aquilini family at the #2 spot ($1.43 million); Adera Group ($1.1 million); Wesbild ($929,576); and Peter Wall and nephew Bruno Wall ($914,425), who own and manage Wall Financial Corp., including the Wall Centre in Vancouver where the BC Liberals held their 2013 election victory win. The top 50 list also includes Polygon, Concord Pacific, Beedie Development Group, Onni, the Redekops and Ilichs.

There are also 10 natural resource companies in the top 50. The coal and metals miner Teck is at the #1 spot ($2.82 million); energy company Encana ($1.18 million); miner Goldcorp ($1.08 million); forestry company West Fraser ($990,320); and also Imperial Metals of the Mt. Polley Quesnel Lake recent mining dam disaster.

The troubling part of all this is the perceived or real influence these donors may have on government policy. Cash for access to government officials or candidates are reported to be a common practice.

Provincial donations are also subsidized by the taxpayer through tax credits to a maximum of $500 tax credit on a donation of $1,150 or more. So a lot of these donation totals are indirectly publically funded, but directed to the big money's candidates of choice rather than being fairly and equitably distributed.

Property developers seem to have significant influence on both civic and provincial policies. Land use policies favour dense transit-oriented large scale market development of investment luxury pre-sold condos that are often left empty. These tower developments are serviced by expensive, publically subsidized infrastructure. The real estate market has become disconnected from the local economy and this is causing the housing affordability crisis.

This affects housing and affordability in a number of ways. Increased development marketed to foreign capital increases demolition of the older more affordable stock, while inflating land values through rezoning. As these new units are generally smaller and more expensive, they do not work for families.

The BC Liberal's privatizing and redevelopment of public assets through sales or long-term leases benefit big money, but are not in the public interest. Often, revenue from asset sales below market value is rushed through to balance the provincial budget. This is the equivalent to selling off one's house below market to pay for living expenses.

Examples include crown land sold off below appraised value for developments like Burke Mountain in Coquitlam; the privatization of BC Rail and the resulting corruption scandal; public schools underfunded, closed and sold off for housing developments; and social housing sold with potential for redevelopment to luxury market condos with resulting tenant displacement like Little Mountain.

There have been land swaps for market housing through deals with BC Housing and the City of Vancouver such as the controversial Brenhill development in New Yaletown. The city-owned social housing land adjacent to Emery Barns Park was swapped at an under-market value of only $15 million, while assessment after rezoning was $130 million. Bob Rennie was on the BC Housing board when a request was brought forward for a $39 million construction loan at 1% for the related social housing project relocation; at the same time, he was also marketing the condo project through his firm and fundraising for the BC Liberals. MLA Rich Coleman, minister responsible for housing – he oversees BC Housing – approved the deal. The 35-storey luxury condo project was marketed in English and Chinese language newspapers as "8 X ON THE PARK."

Mega-debt projects we don't need and can't afford have been approved by the BC Liberals. BC Hydro's Site C dam bypassed the BC Utilities Commission to subsidize a non-viable LNG fracking industry. The BC Liberals accepted donations from foreign sources such as Pacific NorthWest LNG. The majority owner is Petronas, the state-owned energy company of Malaysia, which seeks to build an LNG plant in northern BC.

St. Paul's Hospital is being moved from the West End to the False Creek Flats. This will benefit developers at both ends of the move and a private district energy scheme owned by developer Ian Gillespie at the new site that burns wood. The new location is a less seismically stable site and more vulnerable to a related tsunami since the flats are low elevation and mostly industrial fill.

Of the corporate donations to the BC Liberals, the largest group among the top donors are property developers.

Billionaire Jim Pattison recently announced his foundation's donation of $75 million to St. Paul's Hospital Foundation. Pattison was quoted in the *Vancouver Sun*, saying, "They approached us many years ago and you're right, I told them I wasn't going to put any money into renovating that old hospital." So was this donation influential in the relocation of St. Paul's to a new site that may now bear his name? Jim Pattison is also a major donor to the BC Liberals through his many companies.

In response to investigative articles in both the *New York Times* and *Globe and Mail*, the RCMP are investigating illicit donations where lobbyists and others used their personal credit cards to donate to political parties and were later reimbursed by organizations or employers, a practice that is prohibited under the Elections Act.

But whether this will result in any meaningful charges is yet to be seen, and if so, likely not until after the election. Special prosecutor David Butcher has been appointed to advise the RCMP. Butcher was also hired to manage the BC Liberals' "Quick Wins" scandal prior to the last 2013 provincial election. A party staffer, while working for the province, conducted partisan business in a plan to win votes from ethnic groups that had been traditionally sympathetic to the NDP. Only one charge came after the election; a communications director resigned and paid a token fine of $5,000.

The *Globe and Mail* reported that specific instances identified so far have mostly involved the BC Liberals, with nearly $93,000 in illegal dona- *continued p.25…*

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■ **"Pain free in two weeks.** This is what happened to me personally. I tried drugs, acupuncture, magnets, physio and others. Finally, a specially processed shark cartilage supplement helped me. Since then, I have helped hundreds of thousands of people worldwide."* *Nick A. Jerch, Founder of Bell Lifestyle Products Inc.* ■ **"I tried another brand** and the pain came back. Two weeks taking Bell Joint Relief and the pain is gone again."* *Gert Dupuis, Hanmer, ON.* ■ **On our website** people wrote: "Can walk again for hours"*; "Can climb stairs without hanging on to railing"*; "First time in fifteen years I can sleep at night"*. Hundreds of testimonials on our website with full names and towns. The shark cartilage used in this product is a responsibly sourced by-product of the food industry. ■ **"I have used Bell Joint Relief daily for over five years** It has been the only product to keep me mobile without constant knee pain. Both knees ached with osteoarthritis after years of playing soccer in my younger days. Now I am pain free and on a maintenance dosage."* Ken Hutcheson, 70, Bridgenorth, ON. ■ **"When I started Bell Joint Relief** I noticed not having as much pain in my joints, my knees were stronger and nerve pain down my legs." Sharon Posnikoff, 61, Regina, SK. ■ **"In just two weeks** I could feel the difference. Pain steadily decreasing."* Robert K. Welsh, 67, Flint, MI.

Frequent bathroom trips? Prostate Ezee Flow Tea®

Men can lead a normal life again. Stops dribbling, burning and rushing frequently to the bathroom. Get up once a night or not at all.* Helps reduce urologic symptoms associated with mild to moderate BPH (enlarged prostate gland). Helps prevent recurrent urinary tract infections (UTIs). Provides antioxidants.

Product #4A NPN 80051642

■ **"Best product on the market.** I had 100% relief. I don't have to get up anymore during the night. My sex life has changed completely. I'm a new man today. Thanks a million for this incredible tea."* Oleg Kerler, Thornhill, ON. ■ **"Prostate Ezee Flow Tea worked quickly for a non-tea drinker!** My wife bought your Prostate Ezee Flow Tea and made me drink it. Within a week, my urine flow was back to normal and no more burning. Also, I do not get up as often during the night. I'm now a tea drinker. I am very happy with the results. Great product!"* John Hurlbut, 56, London, ON. ■ **"Within one week I had relief.** In two weeks I was back to normal. I continue to use the tea for maintenance. It tastes good too."* Colin Jewall, 64, Kelowna, BC. ■ **"A real life saver.** This is my fourth year of drinking your Prostate Ezee Flow Tea. I highly recommend this tea."* Roman Leyzerovich, 79, Pittsburgh, PA.

100% Truthful testimonials with full names and towns.

Those who have provided their testimonial received one free Bell product of their choice.

***Results may vary from one person to another.**

Incontinence, urinary tract infections (UTIs). Bladder Control Tea

"Overactive bladder problem gone "Have my full confidence back"; "No more frequent bathroom trips". "The tea changed my life". Full details below. Bell Lifestyle has literally hundreds of testimonials with women stating that they had relief. Bell Bladder Control Tea for Women (Product #4b) or Bladder One for Women (Product #90) below can help quickly. All of our products come with a Money Back Guarantee. Thousands of women all over the world have had relief. **Hundreds of women wrote: "This tea works!** My overactive bladder problem is gone. No more frequent bathroom trips. I now get a good night's sleep."* Suzie Brown, 67, Corning, CA. ■ **"I was skeptical** to believe a tea would help after all the medicines and surgery. The testimonials made me try it and I found they were TRUE! It does work!"* Angela Romualdi, 46, Maple, ON. ■ **"The Bladder Control Tea has been a real improvement of my life.** I am happy I have my full confidence back for my outings and daily, worry-free activities."* Annette Thibault, 72, Montreal, QC. ■ **"I am really amazed and thrilled that I tried this Bladder Control Tea.** Within five days, I have seen a big improvement and within ten days all symptoms were gone."* Iona F. Stites, 80, Saskatoon, SK. ■ **"The tea changed my life.** I have been suffering with UTIs for years. A friend recommended the Bell Bladder Control Tea for Women. I have regained control and feel that as long as I have this tea I can live a normal life."* Thank you. Marija Biotic, 30, Toronto, ON. ■ **"Bell Bladder Control Tea is very effective.** You can witness the effects after a few days of taking it. Fascinating results."* Anna Toulina, 54, Pickering, ON.

Product #4B NPN 80048480

New! Bladder One for Women.™

The above Bladder Control Tea for Women (Product #4b) has helped thousands of women with incontinence, bladder infections and UTI's for the last ten years. Realizing that some women prefer a capsule with the same herbs in it, Bell Lifestyle has created Bladder One for Women (Product #90) with potent herbal extracts. Either product may work for you and both are available in many health food stores and pharmacies in Canada, the U.S. and overseas countries. ■ **"When I used Bladder One for Women, I was impressed**. With only one capsule I took at night, I got eight hours of sleep with no discomfort and I got my control back. Great product." Lori Malone, 59, Saskatoon, SK.

#90 NPN 80065597

FREE! TRIAL PACK! Receive a **FREE** Bladder One for Women (Product #90) sample pack (6 capsules) by simply emailing your postal address to **FreeSample@Bellifestyle.com** and asking for your free sample of Bladder One for Women. Regular size bottles of Bladder One for Women (Product #90) and Bladder Control Tea for Women (Product #4b) are available in many health food stores and pharmacies.

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Founder's own story: Eighteen years ago, I started to have arthritis, as well as prostate, kidney, snoring and sleep apnea problems, which were all helped quickly with natural health products. I made it my life's purpose to help others. *Nick A. Jerch*

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Common Ground Ad

by Marianne Williamson

Honouring Athena, embracing Aphrodite

Many people complain these days that romance hasn't come their way. Often, however, we see that if romance were to be likened to a visitor, it hasn't arrived yet because we ourselves are like a town where there's no place for it to stay. We keep saying we want love, but don't truly prepare for its arrival. Why would it come to a place where there's no real welcome past the initial "So glad you're here!"?

> When we are ready to forgive ourselves and others, ready to humbly ask for guidance in love, ready to rise above the resistance to love, then we are ready for Aphrodite's blessing.

Many contemporary women now embody the Greek goddess Athena while craving a visit from Aphrodite. Yet the gods only come to where they are fully embodied. Embodying Athena, we attract worldly achievement; embodying Aphrodite, we attract love. What's exciting about being a Western woman today is that we're allowed to embody as many and whichever goddesses we choose. For those who seek a deeper romance, it serves to embody the goddess Aphrodite for she is the goddess of romantic love. In order to become her, however, we must approach her with reverence and love.

"Aphrodite's temple" is a real psychic vortex, as is any divine space, with steps to be climbed in order to enter. There are both external and internal steps to climb before entering Aphrodite's temple, and all of them can be learned.

External steps to the Temple of Aphrodite

Get all exercise equipment and office work *out of your bedroom*. Aphrodite is a temple, not a workspace. Make your living environment, clothes (even undergarments) and personal behaviour a magnet for romantic vibrations. Your own manifestation must match her frequency in order to attract her. Study books, take seminars, attend support groups, go to therapy – anything to avail yourself of all opportunities to learn greater mastery in romantic relationships. Some barriers to Aphrodite are simply mental, emotional and behavioural patterns that we learned and can now unlearn. All negative energy, when surrendered to God for healing, can be transmuted and transcended through grace.

Internal steps to the Temple of Aphrodite

Take an honest look at how you view relationships. Do you value them less than other areas of life, judging them as somehow trivial? Do you truly give yourself emotional *permission* to fall in love and stay there? Do you hold covert, or even overt, judgments against men or women as romantic partners? Such judgments must be recognized and consciously surrendered for healing or they remain subconscious forces that sabotage our chances for love.

Take an internal scan of your psychological, spiritual, emotional and physical landscape. Are you emotionally available? Are you physically prepared? Are you ready to be gentle with a man, or at times of fear might you be demeaning or impatient or angry? Are you yet kind and giving enough for love? Are you juicy and erotic and honouring of real sexual desire? Are you ready to welcome a partner, to serve his or her growth that you might participate together in a great romantic journey? Combining the sacred and the erotic is a high adventure; Aphrodite is both goddess and lover. We must approach the gods, *and* love, with reverence if we're to receive their blessings.

Even those who feel that they have failed at love can receive the blessing of Aphrodite's touch. For she does not just reward those who are willing and ready to love; she also heals those who come to her weakened in the wars of love, now ready to make peace with the parts of themselves that have tried and failed at love, shown up and been rejected, had the chance and blown the opportunity. When we are ready to forgive ourselves and others, ready to humbly ask for guidance in love, ready to rise above the resistance to love, then we are ready for Aphrodite's blessing. Once we are ready for her, she is ready for us, and once joining with her, we embody her. Then love arrives on angel's wings, for gods can do what only gods can do. And love surrenders to their slightest command.

Source: www.marianne.com

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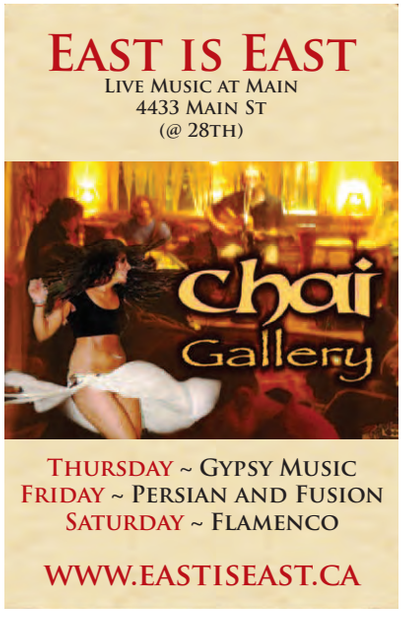

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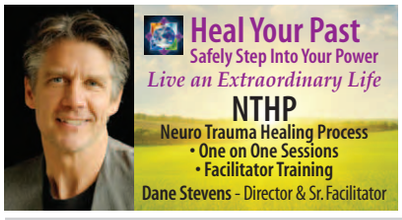
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INDEPENDENT MEDIA Meghan Sali

TPP mistakes never to be repeated

By now, most of you have heard of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), a sweeping international agreement brokered between 12 nations across the Pacific region, including Canada and the US.

Although often referred to as a trade deal, in reality, the TPP would have had profound impacts on the lives of the nearly 800 million citizens of the TPP nations, well beyond that which is traditionally within the scope of trade. It would affect digital rights, the environment, labour rights, health care, public services, even undermining the accountability of our democratic institutions by allowing corporations to sue Canada in secretive tribunals.

The TPP was negotiated in near-total secrecy; powerful corporations were given a privileged seat at the table while citizens and public interest groups were excluded from the talks.

At OpenMedia, our work on the TPP constitutes the single, longest-sustained campaign in our history. We have been deeply concerned about how the TPP's copyright and intellectual property provisions would dramatically change how citizens use the Internet, criminalizing online activities, invading our privacy and costing our digital economy millions.

That's why it was good news when public pressure pushed both Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump into pledging to reject the TPP in the run-up to last year's US presidential election. The subsequent withdrawal of the US from the TPP has effectively put the deal on its deathbed, although remaining TPP nations are in discussions about resurrecting it in an alternative format.

Canadians want the federal government to withdraw from the TPP and to ensure much greater transparency in future trade deals.

What does this mean for Canada? Why did the TPP prove to be so unpopular among the Canadian public? And what needs to be done to restore public trust in future trade processes?

High-profile trade negotiations are due to take place in the coming months: on NAFTA, with China, the UK and Pacific nations. Thankfully, Canadians have the answers.

Our recently-published Let's Talk TPP Citizens' Report, shaped by input from nearly 28,000 individuals who submitted feedback to the official TPP consultations, sheds light on why so many Canadians opposed the TPP and outlines what needs to be done to restore public trust in trade processes.

The most common reason given for opposing the TPP was simply that Canadians weren't consulted. Stephen Harper's government conducted negotiations that excluded the public entirely. The Trudeau government, on the other hand, launched a consultation process, but by then the deal had already been signed, with the result that Canadians were effectively being asked to take it or leave it.

Our report's findings were clear: Canadians want the federal government to formally withdraw from the TPP and to ensure much greater transparency and genuine public engagement in future trade deals. Canadians' desire for active citizen engagement to ensure the final product of any future trade negotiation reflects the broad needs of the public, rather than the narrow desires of powerful corporations.

Put simply, Canadians cannot support trade deals made in secret. And, with so many crucial negotiations close on the horizon, that's a lesson the federal government needs to take to heart.

Read our report at LetsTalkTPP.ca/report and help by sending it to your local MP using our tool at LetsTalkTPP.ca

Meghan Sali is communications specialist for OpenMedia, a community-based organization that works to keep the Internet open, affordable and surveillance-free.

photo by Evan Leeson

Mega-bridge, mega-bucks

by Nic Slater

BC Liberals push for a replacement for the Massey Tunnel at too high a cost to the environment and local government

The 67-year-old Massey Tunnel sits in the middle of BC's largest river delta. Over 320 square kilometres of former marshlands that occupy a sea level estuary along the Pacific Flyway, it is one of North America's most important migratory bird routes. Most Vancouver residents are unaware of the importance of the Fraser River's delta even though it sits in their own backyard. A birder's paradise for decades, it is also a recreational waterway with untapped potential.

Replacing the four-lane Massey Tunnel with a 10-lane, $4 billion (before cost over-runs) mega-bridge has little to do with car traffic that is constricted by too many single occupant cars. The Vancouver 'federal' Port Authority has been the only significant proponent of a bridge that would facilitate dredging the Fraser another five metres lower than the existing tunnel, in order to accommodate some of the world's largest ships. Fast forward to the BC Liberal Government's LNG pipedream and a major LNG plant expansion in Delta for such ships that will require a minimum 200-foot bridge clearance.

Of the Metro Vancouver mayors, 23 of 24 voted against building a new 10-lane bridge.

In Richmond, directly across the river, Vancouver's main jet fuel facility will be situated, and up the river in Surrey would be the newly proposed US coal export facility. Imagine, our mighty Fraser could soon be a major energy super highway and that is before one considers the constant threat of tar sands pipelines that have yet to find a home.

The Fraser's increased dredged depth for the shipping channel has created a salin-

continued p.24...

Facts and evidence matter

We recently highlighted the faulty logic of a pseudoscientific argument against addressing climate change: the proposition that because CO2 is necessary for plants, increasing emissions is good for the planet and the life it supports. Those who read, write or talk regularly about climate change and ecology are familiar with other anti-environmental arguments not coated with a scientific sheen.

A common one is that if you drive a car, buy any plastic goods or even type on a computer keyboard your observation that we need to reduce fossil fuel use is not valid, no matter how much evidence you present. Like the "CO2 is plant food" claim, it's a poor argument, but for different reasons.

Fossil fuels are useful for many purposes…so why extract, transport and burn them so rapidly and wastefully?

The statement that gas-fuelled cars cause pollution is true whether or not the person making it drives a car, just as a claim that automobile emissions are harmless is false, regardless of the claimant's car ownership or driving habits.

Fossil fuels are useful for many purposes – from life-saving medical equipment to computer keyboards – so why extract, transport and burn them so rapidly and wastefully? Supplies aren't endless.

Most people don't have the time or expertise to read through and comprehend the massive volumes of peer-reviewed science on phenomena such as feedback loops, ocean acidification, extreme weather events, species extinction and sea level rise.

Fortunately, some excellent resources provide information for people with varying levels of knowledge and expertise: skepticalscience.com offers a big-picture approach by examining the peer-reviewed literature.

You can also find accessible science on the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and National Aeronautics and Space Administration websites. The American Institute of Physics offers a comprehensive history of climate science.

Media outlets with considerable, credible coverage include *The Guardian* and *National Geographic* and environmentally focused websites such as Grist, EcoWatch and the National Observer. Desmog Blog's timely articles and extensive database shed light on what's behind concerted efforts to downplay or dismiss the seriousness of climate change. Websites for environmental groups like the David Suzuki Foundation, Pembina Institute and others are also good information sources. *Just Cool It!*, a book coming out April 22 by Foundation senior editor Ian Hanington and me explains climate change and focuses on solutions.

It's increasingly clear we can't rely on politicians to get us out of the mess we've created. The current US administration is full of people who reject the overwhelming evidence for human-caused climate change. In Canada, our government has some good climate policies, but continues to approve fossil fuel infrastructure projects.

The silver lining of the irrationality that has descended on the US is that it has sparked a growing movement to promote scientific evidence and science-based solutions. The "March for Science" taking place in cities throughout the US and beyond on Earth Day, April 22, is one example.

We have scientific evidence and rational arguments on our side. Let's use them to support solutions.

Excerpted from **"Facts and evidence matter in confronting climate crisis." David Suzuki** is a scientist, broadcaster, author and co-founder of the David Suzuki Foundation. Written with contributions from David Suzuki Foundation senior editor Ian Hanington. Learn more at www.davidsuzuki.org

*...**Real change** from pg. 5*

Put aside misconceptions of NDP financial ineptitude. Above all, drop the biggest, saddest of all, mistaken beliefs: that your vote won't make a huge difference in your own life and the province on May 9.

Horgan has been aptly described (*Globe and Mail*) as the "polar opposite of Christy Clark." She paints him as "spineless, with no backbone," which is, typically, far from reality. The man I met is as rock-solid as his warm handshake, quick-footed in his encyclopaedic grasp of issues, clear-eyed in his perspective on real-life problems and solutions.

It's difficult not to think of him as Honest John, a Bernie Sanders, to Clark's self-confessed Donald J. Trump, with values and "public service" to match.

Like Bernie, John has a long, proud history of fighting for the "little guy." A civil servant in the NDP Harcourt government (1991-1996), he took on tough files, including the Columbia River US Treaty and balancing land use and First Nation treaties. "I threw him into some deep ends of pools,"recalls his former boss. "John knows the province and has a tremendous amount of experience."

Horgan became a highly popular and effective MLA in 2005. Very active behind the scenes, off corporate media's faulty radar, he introduced private member bills to require the legislature to convene in spring and fall, to reform standing committees with proportional representation and conflict of interest amendments. He's striven for fair taxes, including carbon taxes on exempted, industrial emitters, and to get the Evergreen Line and light rail built. He recommended implementing aquaculture restrictions, fought to ban North Coast tanker traffic and offshore oil exploration and pushed for an Endangered Species Act.

When MLA salaries increased 29% (2007), he and NDP members donated their raises to hospices, food banks and other charities, for the session. On six occasions, he's tried to take big money out of politics, a hot-button election issue. And he is honestly committed to changing the electoral system so every vote counts.

Horgan was a baby when his father died one Christmas Eve, shortly after inviting the world-renowned Harlem Globetrotters to the family home. They passed the infant Horgan around like a basketball. John's been a jock ever since and thinks Clark would have benefited from playing competitive team sports.

Also, unlike Christy, who left SFU empty handed after cheating in a student election, John earned degrees from Trent in Ottawa and Sydney University (Masters, history) in Australia, while playing varsity basketball on both campuses. "I've studied Canadian history up and down and all ways to Sunday," he says. He credits the single mother who raised him and three siblings and an inspiring conversation with Tommy Douglas as foundational role models.

Once an at-risk teenager, he benefited first-hand from teachers and social services. Horgan, now 57, has driven delivery trucks and pulled lumber in a planer mill; a former plasterer's helper, he still mixes cement to make rock walls. He works on old furniture, plays disc golf, darts and is a big-time *Star Trek* fan. He even sought an extra's role when it was shooting in Vancouver. A Starship Enterprise model sits in his Vancouver office and a jar of tar-sand dilbit on his desk in Victoria.

My favourite, little-known John Horgan fact: he's colour blind. On a BC road trip with Ellie, he had difficulty distinguishing dead, red trees, devastated by pine beetles and green living trees, temporarily spared. As they began to count and compare them numerically, Horgan saw the forest for the trees and began to evolve from a pro-energy advocate to a passionate climate activist. His climate plan has been embraced and supported as 'real action' by the likes of Tzeporah Berman, SFU's Mark Jaccard and the Pembina Institute. Many prefer it to the spotty Green platform.

"Say anything John," the ugly cheap shot from Stephen Harper and associates is actually a compliment, considering the source. Building consensus and representing people is slower than fixating on the filthy rich.

For real change in BC, let's elect John Horgan and his team on May 9. We need and deserve a better BC.

Party for the Planet April 22

Celebrate Earth Day at an event near you…or DIY

by Bruce Mason

photo ©Tom Wang

Mother Earth is inviting and encouraging us to party hearty on her behalf, as if our lives depended on it. Millions of brothers and sisters have already got it going with bold plans to grow Earth Day on April 22 bigger and better.

And if you need another reason to party, start celebrating Canada's year-long, 150th birthday (when was the last time you did that?) on Earth Day.

Vancouver: The Metro Vancouver Collaborative Cascadia Green Building Council is launching Vancouver's biggest Earth Day event with an evening of entertainment and inspiration entitled "Innovation in Sustainability." It includes speakers, live music, award-winning catering, BC wines and local microbrews. Full event (4-10pm) tickets are $30. For the celebration only (7-10pm), tickets are $18, which includes the live band and free open bar at the TELUS Garden, 510 W. Georgia St.

Vancouver's longest running Earth Day celebration takes place at **Everett Crowley Park**, 8200 Kerr St. (11am-3pm). More than 1,000 native mushrooms will be planted to help grow forest roots.

Since 2011, Vancouverites have flocked to **Commercial Drive** for a parade (begins at Commercial and Broadway at 1pm) and festival (Grandview Park 2-5pm). Speakers include Grand Chief Stewart Phillip and Ta'Kaiya Blaney is among the lineup of performers. **Wesbrook Village,** UBC, is hosting a book donation, swap and sale. Bring in your donated books to swap. MBA House, 3385 Wesbrook Mall, April 22, 12-4pm.

Surrey claims to stage BC's largest Earth Day, and rightly so, for now. In 2016, 20,000 people took part and are still talking about it. They already have the best-named annual celebration: "Party for the Planet." But Surrey isn't resting on its laurels; in fact, it's raising the bar big-time with Juno-nominated entertainment, street hockey, rock-wall climbing and electric vehicles. Walk through a tiny house, take home a native plant or a BC Lion's autograph. See a shortlist of 25 attractions at http://www.surrey.ca/partyfortheplanet/things-to-do.aspx, including the top five for active and artsy kids. It all kicks off Saturday, April 22 (10am-7pm) at the Plaza at City Hall, 13450 104th Avenue.

Victoria has opted for free (outdoors and at Clifford Carl Hall) and ticketed events (10am-5pm) at the Royal BC Museum, 675 Belleville St. The festival and sustainability showcase includes interactive art, music, panels and Vancouver Island's largest electric vehicle show.

Maple Ridge got started early in March, with lead-up projects to the main Earth Day event when thousands of people will participate at Memorial Peace Park, 224 Street and McIntosh Ave., (11am-3pm).

North Vancouver: Evergreen and other community groups are planting native trees and shrubs in the revitalized Mahon Park, 1634-1648 Jones Ave.

All over the province, people are planting, learning and cleaning parks and beaches to join in the worldwide event that was inaugurated in 1970 with 20 million-strong.

If you're "too busy" on the 22nd, not to worry. **The Stanley Park Ecology Society** is hosting events all week in one of the world's finest urban parks (www.stanleyparkecology.ca/events). It's all good and the good news is you've got a 'Get out of Jail Card' to shut down the screens – after searching for the nearest event – and 'get down by going outside.'

Best for last: grow your own Earth Day Celebration! Mother Earth will be eternally grateful.

*...**Mega Bridge** from pg. 22*

ity problem for farmers in Delta and Richmond, due to the heavier salt water wedge forcing its way up to almost as far as the Alex Fraser Bridge. Irrigation of farmlands will fast become a thing of the past once the spring freshet wanes and allows the salt water wedge to turn the river's fresh water into water too salty for farming. In fact, dredging to unprecedented river depths is an unknown that can only be determined through years of study, yet the Federal Government has refused to implement an Environmental Review of the project. That leaves what's left of the Provincial Environmental Assessment to conserve the most abundant salmon bearing river in BC and Canada. Dredging the Fraser deeper may be good for the shipping industry, but it could potentially make the whole of the delta estuary a saltwater marsh that would no longer support the spawning of our salmon.

Tunnel costs vary depending on the design. Take for instance the M86 in Paris. Completed in 2010, it cost $320 million Cdn./mile for six lanes and it was one of the more expensive tunnels. Compare that to $4 billion for a 10-lane, one-mile-long Massey Tunnel replacement bridge and it seems costs have risen dramatically in seven years. Either that or the BC Liberal Government has lost any ability to build a cost effective transportation system.

Proponents of tunnels point out the existing Massey Tunnel is one-kilometre long. In Europe, between Denmark and Germany, an eight-lane, 18-kilometre tunnel is being built at a cost of $4.5 billion or $250 million/kilometre. The BC Liberals' stated costs and reasons for a new bridge have no viable business case, something that has been requested through Freedom of Information (FOIs) and that the same government has refused to comply with.

Metro Vancouver does not support the BC government's plans to replace the tunnel, stating a 10-lane bridge does not address traffic congestion problems and would download costly infrastructure work on local governments. Of the Metro Vancouver mayors, 23 of 24 voted against building a new 10-lane bridge. A new bridge would open the funnel up and allow traffic into Richmond more quickly, creating a bottleneck at the Oak and Knight Street bridges and, of course, further worsen Vancouver traffic.

The cost of this BC Liberal mega project is $1,000 for every man, woman and child in BC and that is before the financing costs are counted.

Reference: Article at tunneltalk.com: "Cost benefits of large-diameter bored tunnels."

Nic Slater is a Vancouver activist and a Director of Fraser Voices. Facebook: Fraser Voices. Twitter: @Save_The_Fraser.

...***Big Money*** *from pg. 16*

tions identified from 43 contributions, compared to $10,000 in donations identified for the NDP. Watchdog groups such as IntegrityBC and the Dogwood Initiative have both further identified lists of suspect donations and handed the information to the RCMP.

Recently, former Montreal mayor Michael Applebaum was sentenced to one year in jail on corruption-related charges. The *Globe and Mail* reported that, during the trial, former aide Hugo Tremblay testified he led developers and businessmen to believe their projects would be delayed or not approved unless they made a supplemental cash contribution that was then split with Applebaum.

With all the big money legally allowed to be poured into provincial and municipal election campaigns in BC, one could compare BC to Quebec before efforts to stem corruption were implemented.

The civic rules are even less accountable than the BC provincial rules. Civic parties and candidates can accept unlimited corporate, union, individual and foreign donations. They also only have to disclose donations in the year of the election. So three of the four years of donations in a municipal election cycle could go unreported unless done voluntarily. Property developers are prominent donors to Vision Vancouver and NPA, but Vancouver Greens do not accept funding from developers.

The BC NDP have brought several motions to parliament for campaign finance reform that have always been defeated by the BC Liberals. All parties in the City of Vancouver council have, on numerous occasions, unanimously asked for the province to change municipal campaign finance rules, but the province has so far refused to do so.

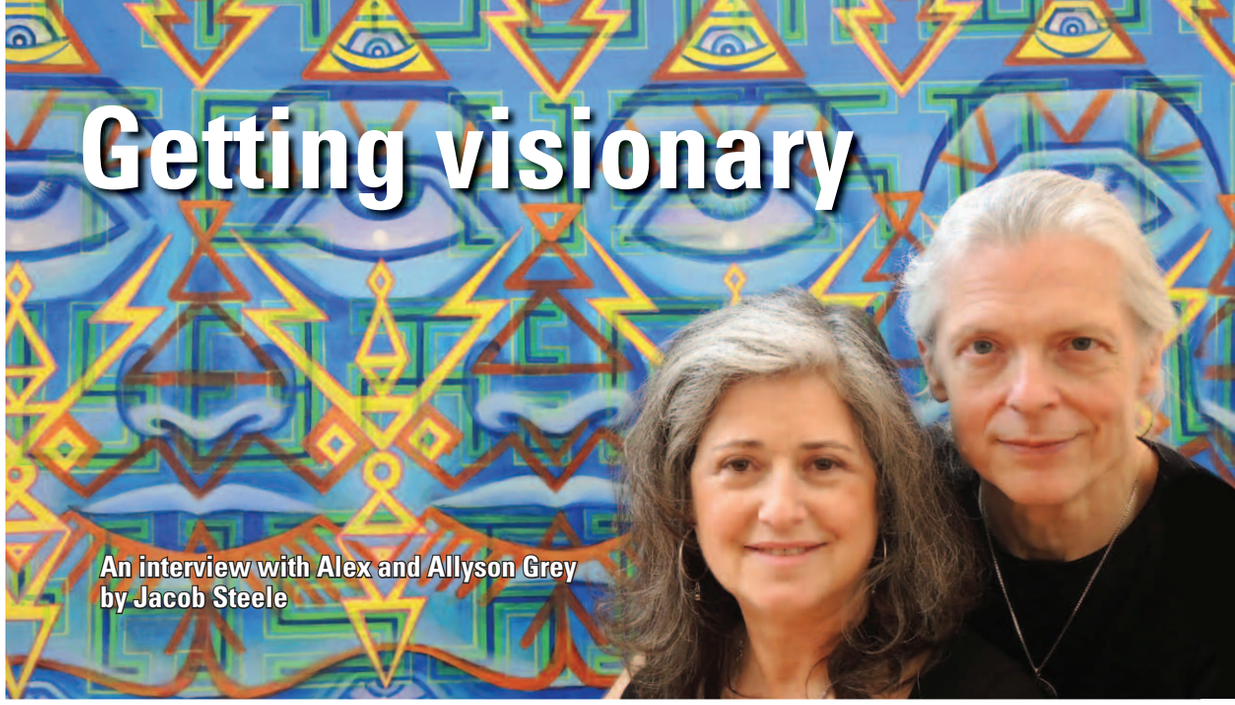
The BC NDP have said they would ban corporate and union donations with limits on individual donations. They also are willing to change the municipal rules to match. The BC Greens have said they will do the same.

The BC Liberals have refused to make these changes, but after a lot of pressure, they have announced they will initiate a go-nowhere, non-binding review of campaign finance.

In this election, it is critical to put pressure on all parties and candidates to seriously commit to campaign finance reform to stop the current practices that breed systemic corruption. Only the provincial government can change these rules for both BC and the municipal governments. For the sake of democracy, the people of BC deserve better. A change of government would be refreshing.

Elizabeth Murphy is a private sector project manager and a former Property Development Officer for the City of Vancouver's Housing & Properties Department and for BC Housing. info@elizabethmurphy.ca

Tools: call4change.ca is a new citizen-initiated tool to help voters reach their MLA by phone or e-mail with a message calling for a ban on corporate and union donations. For further reference, see integrityBC.ca, dogwoodBC.ca, cityhallwatch.ca, coalitionvan.ca



Getting visionary

An interview with Alex and Allyson Grey by Jacob Steele

Jacob Steele: What do you see as the visionary artist's role, and what do you seek to communicate about life in relation to the polarities of dark and light?

Alex Grey: The artist is a lens for the soul. Artworks are the views seen through that lens. The artist's subject dictates where the lens will be focused. Light is the core subject in our work. We are painters of transcendental light. Allyson's paintings are abstract expressing a world view of essentialized consciousness through spectral light and secret writing. My art is figurative, portraying states of consciousness throughout the hero's journey.

> Spiritually inspired art is infused with devotional love energy, transferring to the viewer a sense of the sacred that makes life worth living.

Allyson Grey: The responsibility of the artist is to be true to their own soul. The mission of art is to make the soul perceptible. Polarities infuse our art and life: light and dark, chaos and order, bright colour and grey monochrome, man and woman, old and young, life and death. Polarities reflect the paradox of our mortal existence in relation to our timeless spirit. Spiritually inspired art is infused with devotional love energy, transferring to the viewer a sense of the sacred that makes life worth living.

JS: The Chapel of Sacred Mirrors (CoSM) is a project to which you have devoted many years. What is CoSM's mission?

Alex Grey: The mission of CoSM is to build an enduring sanctuary of visionary art to evolve the creative spirit and uplift a global community. CoSM is a radically welcoming interfaith art church, a context for a community that honours and practices art as a spiritual path. To further the spiritual practice of art, CoSM offers workshops and cultural programs.

At CoSM, we celebrate commitments of love and passages of consecration including weddings, baby blessings and memorials. Grey House is filled with art and altars. The Wisdom Trail through the woods features natural beauty, altars, a labyrinth, a reflecting pond, murals and sculptural installations. Overnight stays can be reserved in Grey House, CoSM's 10-bedroom guest house, 365 nights of the year. CoSM offers an inspiring destination for souls seeking to align with creative source, co-create a mighty force field of compassion and manifest sacred space together.

Allyson Grey: Now under construction, targeted to open December 2017, is Entheon, CoSM's sanctuary of Visionary Art, where visitors will experience an exhibition of mystic art inside a sculptural building. The All-One Gallery at Entheon will feature an annually rotating exhibit of original paintings, sculpture and muti-media by the finest artists of the International Visionary Art movement and there will be a gallery featuring many of my paintings and works on paper. Designed by Alex, Entheon will display many of his best-loved works including the Sacred Mirrors.

Alex Grey: We invite the world of visionaries to become part of the Entheon project, a way to honour the mystical experience through enshrining artifacts inspired by the higher worlds. (buildentheon.com, cosm.org)

Excerpted from an interview conducted by **Jacob Steele** of **B**anyen Books & Sound, banyen.com

EVENT APR 27-30: Alex and Allyson make their debut appearance in Vancouver. Join them at the Vogue Theatre on Friday April 28 for their feature presentation. Tickets available at www.ticketfly.com and Banyen Books, www.banyen.com, 604-732-7912. More info at www.apparentproductions.com

APR 10, MAY 10, JUN 8
Easter Full Moon Meditation: APR 10. Introduction followed by group meditation. 7PM, Central Library, 350 Georgia St., Peter Kaye Room. MAY 10 & JUN 8 Full Moon Meditations. www.share-international.ca

APR 11
"The Real Estate Crisis in Vancouver: Why it's happening, who's winning and how it can be fixed." Featuring American economist Michael Hudson. Doors 6:30PM. Starts 7PM. Rio Theatre, 1660 E. Broadway. Tickets: www.real-estate-crisis-vancouver.eventbrite.com

APR 13
Time For Change? A new era for humanity. Free multimedia presentation 7PM, Central Library, 350 Georgia St., Peter Kaye Room, www.share-international.ca

APR 16
Richmond: Free Workshop "Human Unity," Theory and Practice of Inner Light Meditation. 2-4 PM, Meditation & Ecology Centre. Please pre-register: Linda, 604-985-5840.

APR 18
Vancouver: Free Workshop "Human Unity," Theory and Practice of Inner Light Meditation. 6-9 PM, Science of Spirituality. Please pre-register: Linda, 604-985-5840.

APR 21-23
Advanced Reflexology Clinical Skills Certificate Weekend Course: 50-hour certificate course. Prerequisite: Basic Foot Reflexology Course. $375 + GST. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818, www.pacificreflexology.com

APR 21-23
"Self-Inquiry and the Unfettered Self" with Dr. Kathryn Jefferies (www.kathrynjefferies.com) at Krishnamurti Educational Centre of Canada. Beautiful oceanfront setting near Victoria. Register at www.krishnamurti-canada.ca Email programs@krishnamurti-canada.ca, 250-744-3354.

APR 24
Join the Rt. Hon. Adrienne Clarkson and John Ralston Saul in conversation. "6 Degrees Vancouver: Are You Home?" 6 Degrees Vancouver will explore citizenship and inclusion in a world that demands answers now. SFU, Goldcorp Centre for the Arts. 8AM-5PM, $50. Tickets: www.6degreesvancouver.com

APR 27-30
Alex Grey & Allyson Grey in Vancouver: Join these world-renowned visionary artists for a unique series of events that showcase the interconnection of art, consciousness, community and culture. www.apparentproductions.com

APR 27-MAY 11 (& other dates)
NLP & Hypnosis Certification Trainings in Whistler, BC: Act now to save $1,000 / Apr 27-May11: NLP Master Practitioner / Sept 18-23: NLP Practitioner / Oct 21-Nov 6: NLP Trainer's Training Level / Nov 8-12: Hypnosis Trainer's Training. www.greatnessu.com, 1-866-939-8862

APR 29
A day in Vancouver with poet David Whyte: Half A Shade Braver: The Foundational Elements of A Courageous, Everyday Life. 10-4PM, Canadian Memorial United Church, 1825 W. 16th Ave. Tickets: banyen.com, 604-737-8858.

APR 29-30
The Face in the Mirror: Weekend Zen Meditation Retreat with renowned Zen Buddhist teacher Hogen Bays Roshi. Saturday, 9-6PM, Sunday 9-4PM. Bridge & Enrich Lives Society, 718 E. 20th Ave, Vancouver. $75/concessions. Register/Info: shawcross@shaw.ca, Facebook @North Shore Zendo.

APR 29-MAY 1
Become a Medical Intuitive: Join 4th generation psychic Tina Zion. Develop your inner sight & healer within. Beginners/Advanced welcome. Inner Evolution Centre, Vancouver. Call Dana to register: 604-885-9793. Details: www.danalouisewilliams.com/become-a-medical-intuitive

MAY 3
Clearmind presents "What the World Needs Now: Vulnerable Leadership" with Duane & Catherine O'Kane. Italian Cultural Centre, 3075 Slocan St., Vancouver. 7:30PM sharp. Free entry with display ad on this page. www.clearmind.com

MAY 4
Free book discussion – "Eck Wisdom on Inner Guidance" by Harold Klemp. Who can I trust when all else fails? 7:30-9PM, Metrotown Public Library, 6100 Willingdon Ave., Burnaby. Contact Sandra: 778-834-6911.

MAY 5-7
T & T Spiritual & Wellness Connections invites you to the Body, Mind & Spirit Fair. Located upstairs from the Curling Rink@ The Ridge Meadows Home Show, 4-22371 Lougheed Hwy Maple Ridge, BC. For more info, please visit fair.tandtvancouver.com

MAY 5-7
Basic Holistic Foot Reflexology Certificate Weekend Course: $375+ GST. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818, www.pacificreflexology.com

MAY 6-7
3rd Annual Cannabis Hemp Conference and Expo: The Nest, UBC, Vancouver. 50 speakers including Graham Hancock, Dr. Ethan Russo & Jodie Emery. Exhibitors, panels, workshops, cooking, organic growing & more. Limited seating. Get your tickets today: www.cannabishempconference.com

MAY 11 & JUN 8
Experience a Shamanic Power Initiation at a free Open House in Vancouver, 7:30 PM. Hosted by the Institute of Shamanic Medicine. RSVP by email to info@shamanicmedicine.ca www.shamanicmedicine.ca

MAY 12-14
"The Quest for Truth" with Dr. P. Krishna (www.pkrishna.org) at Krishnamurti Educational Centre of Canada. Beautiful oceanfront setting near Victoria. Register at www.krishnamurti-canada.ca Email programs@krishnamurti-canada.ca, 250-744-3354.

MAY 27
Free Open House - Institute of Holistic Nutrition (Vancouver): Course/Career opportunities, exhibits, lectures & more. 10AM-4PM, 604 West Broadway, Ste. 300. 604-558-4000. Lecture descriptions at www.instituteofholisticnutrition.com

MAY 27-28
Inner Engineering with Sadhguru – Vancouver Convention Centre. Learn a powerful, 21-minute practice. This is an advanced level program. Pre-requisite: completion of Inner Engineering Online, which can be done in the convenience of your home. www.InnerEngineering.com, 604-900-1913.

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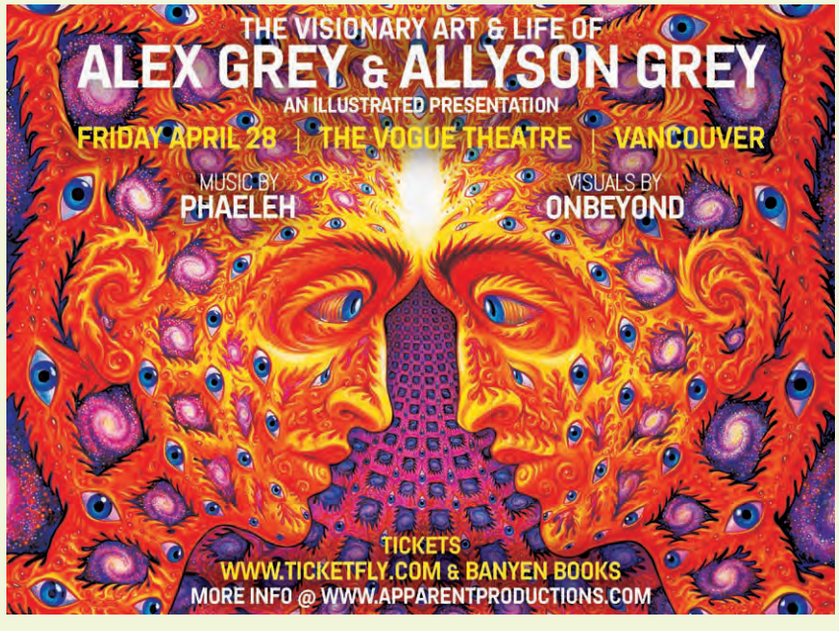
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...*Horgan from pg. 5*

people want to discuss. The Liberals talk about Conference Board of Canada statistics, but people say, 'You know, during that period of time I was struggling. I was worried that if I missed one pay cheque, I was going to be in financial distress. And as I was trying to make ends meet I saw the mill down the street, go down.'

And we're not seeing re-planting and silviculture we expect from the tenure-holders. We should be demanding this, as the public stewards of our land and resources, for this and future generations.

CG: How have BC NDP governments handled the economy better than the Liberals?

JH: We left two balanced budgets to the Liberals and they immediately slashed taxes for the wealthy and corporations, increased medical services premiums (MSPs), claiming that was going to somehow trickle down to the rest of us. Of course, it didn't work that way. They ran massive deficits for a number of years and declared victory.

My responsibility is to lead the NDP and discuss what people are talking to me about, like childcare. People tell me over and over that young families are looking for services to help them participate fully in the economy. So $10-a-day childcare is not a perk or a nicety. It's a necessity for many families, especially women. They have anxiety about the patchwork they must set up: their parents, Monday and Tuesday, Aunt Harriet and Uncle Bill, Wednesdays, figuring out how to keep going. The BC Business Council and the Vancouver Board of Trade support accelerating childcare. It's good for kids, parents and the economy. The Liberals say 'you're on your own,' we're going to take care of our friends, the rest of you, make do.

CG: What about a $15/hr minimum wage?

JH: There are people working two and three jobs to make ends meet and the premier is working one job and getting two salaries, as premier, and as a Liberal party fundraiser.

Most people are struggling and I believe the least we can do is give a pay raise to those who are paid the least in the most expensive jurisdiction in Canada. The premier wants us to think she's benevolent. But we need a methodical way to get to $15/hr, lead the country in wages, as we used to, so all wages go up, not just those at the very bottom.

Wages have stagnated for a decade and BC is the worst place for young people to get ahead. The premier talks about statistics that fit her narrative, but the reality is when you're flying around in a private jet, you're not talking to people. I'm on the SkyTrain, on buses, in communities, meeting with people, answering questions and taking the heat. I'm hearing about the challenges people face. It's time we had a government that was working for them, rather than wealthy donors.

When low income individuals have more money in their pockets, they usually spend it. When they do, they don't go out of town or leave the country. They spend it in the community, which stimulates small business development. We need a systematic approach, to talk to small business owners. The notion of a serving wage, for example. Not only restauranteurs – many of whom have given a million plus dollars to the Liberal party – benefit from a wage that's even more minimal. I was a waiter, worked for tips and was happy to get them. But I believe a minimum wage should be for everybody and it's what we intend to do.

CG: We've benefited from extracting resources, but there's a new consciousness that we should be caring for these, as well. Where are the new jobs and how will you stimulate them?

JH: NDP tax credits for the film industry in the 1990s led to a critical mass that's second to none. That's how the economy grows. It doesn't happen with the wave of a wand. It happens over time. Whenever a government is taking credit for everything that's going on, the chances are pretty good they're doing that because they haven't had any impact at all.

In rural BC, on our resource front, we have less revenue from forestry, mining and natural gas than from MSPs in the last budget. That tells me our traditional industries are in decline. Jobs are being created largely in the Lower Mainland, and south Island, skilled jobs in high tech, information technology, green jobs and building the new economy. That's an area the Liberals ignore. That sector is growing despite the BC Liberals, not because of them.

We're developing technologies to store energy for longer periods. Once you create electricity, you have to move it somewhere. The advantage we've had historically is our reservoir system, in the Columbia and the Peace, we've been able to use these as large batteries.

Living in a rainforest is advantageous. But as climate changes, we're seeing different weather patterns, not as much snowfall (hard to believe after the winter we've had). With less snowpack, a thoughtful government would ask, 'How can we supplement our water hydro-based system with technologies not dependent on water?' The BC Liberals, in their haste to bring on private power, focused on run-of-river projects. They called them small, but some were 250/300 megawatts. Not small; that's a dam.

I'm not averse to the technology, never have been, if appropriately located with minimal impact. No impact on fish, with an existing logging road in some cases, already a good fall, so you have the run to create energy. The better course of action, augmenting our hydro system, are alternatives like solar, wind and geothermal.

Interestingly, Dr. Harry Swain, chair of the federal-provincial joint review panel on environmental, economic, and First Nations impacts of largest public works, in his report on the Site C dam, said Hydro has a responsibility to look at geothermal. Yet there hasn't been a penny invested. In the Chilcotin and other parts of BC, we have a tremendous untapped geothermal resource. And wind and solar power – other alternatives – to complement our existing sources. But the Liberals have been short-sighted in this regard.

John Horgan at Question Period

CG: We're in an affordability crisis with too many homeless. What can be done?

JH: Housing is a broad affordability challenge, the whole continuum of finding single occupancy opportunities for individuals in distress. Families are living in one bedroom apartments, with a second or third child on the way and no prospects. There's nowhere for them to go because housing costs are absolutely out of control.

In 2014, when I became leader and appointed David Eby as housing spokesperson, he went like a terror and said, 'Look at what's happening around us. We see speculative investments and headlines: "Get Out of Gold and Get into Condominiums in Vancouver."' When housing stock becomes a commodity, you've got a problem. It's a fundamental right, not a speculative investment, in my world anyway, and for the vast BC majority. Housing is a safe place to be, to keep out of the elements and grow your family and life. That's not how the BC Liberals look at it.

When we raised these issues in the legislature, highlighting the extraordinary explosion in the cost of single family homes in Vancouver, the response from the BC Liberals was to laugh it off and say, 'You don't like people having equity.' It has nothing to do with that. People are being priced out of the market and the development community, building condos to sell, rather than units to rent.

The federal government's been out of the housing busi-

ness for some 20 years now. Mr. Trudeau made a commitment to get back into it, a great opportunity for a new government led by me to reinvigorate the co-op movement in BC. People living in co-ops are absolutely delighted to be in a safe and affordable environment, with pride of ownership, without all the money to get in.

CG: People, worried about keeping their apartment, now open their Hydro and ICBC bills and can't afford ferries, but hear about surpluses and balanced budgets.

JH: At what cost? The social deficit created by BC Liberals has to be put up against their so-called surpluses. They've been taking money out of our Crown corporations at an unsustainable pace, borrowing money when the companies are actually losing money, and then putting that into these deferral accounts – $6 billion by the end of this term in deferred debt, to be paid by ratepayers.

Before the last election, Christy Clark and Rich Coleman said they had wrestled Hydro to the ground, fired a few people and rates weren't going up. They cancelled the rate hearing and BC utility process. When re-elected: in the first five years, 28% rate increases and much more to come. At the same time, they were taking an increased dividend from the Crown corporation, even though it was losing money. We have more energy than we need, demand is declining. We used to export to the US at a handsome profit, playing the markets. Now, the US is awash in electricity. So we've got nowhere to sell it and more than we need. The average price of electricity in 2006 was $35/megawatt hour. The average price today is the same. Yet we've been buying new supply at $100, $110, $120/mwh and building Site C at a conservatively estimated $90/mwh. You can't buy high and sell low forever; it's falling on us and on our families.

Liberals said they were gonna fix it, then shut the legislature. When your landlord just bumped up your rent and you look at your Hydro bill, that's how homelessness happens. It's critically important to look at the entire continuum of housing, not just those who are currently homeless, but also those on the edge of homelessness, what used to be called middle class. This inequality in our society is the biggest challenge that the new government will have, and, in fact, it's the biggest challenge British Columbia has.

CG: What about the people who need treatment, but have fallen through the cracks?

JH: Mental health and addictions are rampant all over BC. The fentanyl crisis has highlighted to people in smaller communities that this is not just an urban problem. It's a societal problem to be addressed. For example, I'm excited about revitalizing Riverview in the Tri-cities – Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam, Port Moody – not as a place to keep or warehouse people, but as a sanctuary for those who want and hope to break addictions. The best way is to have resources available for front-line workers.

I'm making an announcement: a new ministry of mental health and addictions. It's critically important that there be champions inside government. As a public servant, I know the challenges that government faces and the silos that emerge within the system. But a champion for a cause, whether it's childcare or mental health and addictions, is someone that's working within government to make sure the pockets of cash that exist are consolidated towards delivering services for people. NDP candidate Selina Robinson from Coquitlam is a family therapist and front-line worker – an example from our team.

Riverview lands are an outstanding opportunity for a place of wellness to build support systems out into communities. When it closed, there was nothing to receive those who left. We need to reverse that, not as a warehouse, but as a place of wellness, healing and hope for vulnerable people, every day.

CG: Would a Premier Horgan submit Site C to the utilities process?

JH: Yes. It's the only major project since the Utilities Commission was created that has not gone through the approval process.

CG: What about opening the books on BC Hydro, ICBC, BC Ferries? Are you going to review these with an eye to serving people?

JH: That's a significant part of our platform and why I'm grinning like the Cheshire cat at those three Crowns particularly, fundamentally. Almost 800,000 people live in ferry-dependent coastal communities. I've forgotten more about this than the Liberals know. They don't understand ferries, that's why they do so poorly on Vancouver Island. The ferry system is an extension of our highway system. So, yes, we're going to look at those three major Crowns – ICBC, BC Hydro and BC Ferries – with a magnifying glass and find a better way forward that has people at the centre.

CG: Christy Clark ignored recommendations of her expert panel on a climate change plan. How will you proceed?

JH: I met with panel members and was delighted with space for increasing the carbon price after 2018, a new government's opportunity to look at existing programs, see how we can tweak them, whether that's low emission vehicles or how to give people tools to reduce their footprint. That one-year hiatus gives me some space to have a real conversation, rather than a knee-jerk reaction, and time to hear all about their conclusions.

The task force wasn't just passionate climate action people. Municipal leaders, advocates, industry leaders, the LNG Alliance, were also at the table, a bunch of people, horse-trading, to find a way forward. It disappointed me when a 2020 target was just thrown away. One assumes that, okay, let's move to the 2030 target, but that was just thrown away, as well. The premier rested on reducing our emissions by 2050. That matters to my children and grandchildren. But I want to see action today.

Experts made it clear that carbon taxes are a valuable tool, but not the only one. The only measure of success is a reduction of emissions. If you have and meet targets, it doesn't matter how high your carbon price goes; it just becomes a tax. We've reintroduced a 2030 target. The feds came up with their own strategy of a national carbon price, good news for Canada and for BC because we're already ahead of the game. They've set a price of $50/ton by the year 2020. Our carbon pricing plan focuses on taxing the polluters, creating the largest emissions and giving tools to people who don't have the wealth of large emitters to reduce their own footprint.

The first government in Canada to legislate climate action plan was Joan Sawicki's BC NDP plan in 1999 – the only government to table a climate action plan following the Kyoto Accords. I'm passionate about climate action. In over 50 years on the planet, I've seen and felt the changes. I was cutting our lawn, taking advantage of a beautiful mid-November day. My oldest son reminded me we live in a rainforest, that climate is changing and that I got elected to do something about it.

I'm dedicated to do what I can, if fortunate to win the election, to make substantive changes and leave a planet that's healthy. Instead of just giving tax breaks to people, I want to give money back to people so they can change their own behaviour and everything that's surplus to that will be driven into new technologies, to transit investments, to programs that will reduce emissions. That's the standard we should be measured by.

The creation of the Agricultural Land Reserve by the NDP Barrett government is the most forward-looking policy I can recollect as a history student and proud BC citizen. It's endured multiple different governments over time and has stood as a symbol of what we can and should do with our arable land. I look at the First Nation in my community, the Sooke Nation. They've opened my eyes to alternative energy prospects with photovoltaic solar panels on all of their common buildings. They're meeting their needs, selling back to BC Hydro, powering their greenhouses and growing wasabi for export.

They're also doing shellfish aquaculture in the Sooke Basin with oysters on top of scallops, on top of sea cucumbers, a modest footprint. Food production is through the roof, protein being created by First Nations, with energy from the sun, in the middle of a rainforest. Imagine what we could do in Osoyoos or Penticton or Kamloops where we have arable land and abundant sun? As climate change continues, our imported food sources, Mexico and California, become less viable. It will be more important than ever to protect our arable land and put it to good use, not just growing hay.

I got into government with Mike Harcourt when the Treaty Commission had just begun. I have a masters degree in history and I've looked at Canadian history up and down and all ways to Sunday. Harcourt's commitment to the treaty process really excited me at the start of the '90s. I worked with Mike on a range of files, but was passionate about the treaty process as the way forward. In 25 years, successive court rulings have made it abundantly clear: rights and title aren't just theoretical. I'm excited about the certainty it gives us. To invest in BC, on a land base, talk to First Nations about how to do it.

CG: Electoral reform is needed for a healthy and fair democracy. Are you committed to proportional representation?

JH: I spent years in opposition, without any influence on policy even though the government of the day received less than 50% of votes while the opposition side had the majority of votes, but zero influence on outcome. So in 2009, I voted in favour of STV. It was defeated, but perfection is the enemy of progress. Let's make progress. Whatever this is, it has got to be better.

I believe we are among the most blessed people on the planet, to live in British Columbia. All we need is a government that's working every day for the people who live here, rather than the people that write the cheques. I think that day is just around the corner and a New Democrat government, led by me, will have people at the centre of it.

LETTERS

Justin Trudeau, The Right Honourable,
Prime Minister,
Hill Office, House of Commons,
Ottawa. K1A 0A6

The Honourable Christy Clark,
Premier of British Columbia,
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Victoria, BC, V8W 9E1

Jody Wilson-Raybould,
The Honourable, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada,
284 Wellington Street,
Ottawa, K1A 0H8

Suzanne Anton,
Attorney General of British Columbia,
Ministry of Justice,
PO Box 9280, Station Prov. Govt.,
Victoria, BC, V8W 9J7

Dear Mr. Trudeau, Ms. Clark, Ms. Wilson-Raybould and Ms. Anton:

This letter is an open letter and will be distributed widely in Canada.

I wrote to you, Prime Minister, and to responsible others on January 30, 2017, in relation to the assault upon law and justice undertaken in BC (and Ottawa) in what appears to be an active criminal conspiracy on the part of a large, organized body of members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. They acted, one may believe, to violate the law and, specifically, to entrap converts to Islam: "Impoverished recovering heroin addicts with mental health challenges" (1), John Stuart Nuttall and Amanda Marie Korody in the elaborate production of a false and fraudulent Islamic Terrorist Event in Victoria, BC, July 1, 2013.

The assault upon law and justice is meticulously recorded by the Honourable Madam Justice Catherine Bruce in the Supreme Court of British Columbia. Justice Bruce writes in her judgement: 2016/07/29, Docket 26392, Registry Vancouver, "Regina v. John Stuart Nuttall and Amanda Marie Korody" paragraph 769: "Based on the evidence before me, I am satisfied that the RCMP knowingly exploited the demonstrated vulnerabilities of the defendants in order to induce them to commit the offences." Justice Bruce writes, paragraph 770, "Not only did the police take over the leadership, but they committed illegal acts to enable the defendants to play their small part in the plan." And she writes, paragraph 775, "This is truly a case where the RCMP manufactured the crime; this is not a situation where the police simply 'instigated, originated or brought about' the offence."

Madam Justice Bruce writes earlier, paragraph 63, "From the outset of the planning for Project Souvenir [the name given to the Nuttall/Korody entrapment], it was apparent that the RCMP at the National Headquarters level considered the investigation to be urgent and a national priority." She goes on: "Senior officers at RCMP Headquarters E-INSET Division were regularly briefed on the progress of the investigation."

The seriously considered evidence and judgement by Justice Bruce, which I placed before you Mr. Trudeau, and Ms. Wilson-Raybould, required (A) a response to me, and (B) publicly announced action to investigate in order to confirm the facts Justice Bruce placed on the court record, and to pursue prosecution of RCMP officers involved in the alleged criminal activities … as part of an overall and full review of RCMP operations.

The replies I received, written anonymously, and purporting to be from (a) a BC Ministry of Justice office and (b) from the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP were confused and, as I read them, intended to mislead. Since no one signed the letters, I could only believe they were fraudulent and so I chose to regard them as frivolous. They read as if they are frivolously intended.

Your refusals to reply to me, Mr. Trudeau and Ms. Wilson-Raybould, I take to be demonstrations of cowardice. I believe that you can only be considered (by reasonable and prudent Canadians) to be accessories to whatever crimes have been committed because of your failure to fulfill the responsibilities that your oaths of office and your positions held in trust for all Canadians require of you.

Your cowardice strengthens the alleged criminal position of the RCMP, individually, and as an institution, presenting an increased danger to the Peace, Order, and Good Government of Canada.

Your cowardice recalls the actions of Liberal Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau in all the matters relating to the October Crisis of 1970. Careful investigators allege that, with a small group of insider others, he released the RCMP from the requirement to act within the law and bore serious responsibility for the murders of Pierre Laporte and Mario Bachand, as well as for countless criminal acts engaged in by the RCMP.

So alarming was RCMP criminal activity over several years in Quebec that on June 16, 1977, the Quebec government established the Keable Commission to investigate. In rapid response, Pierre Trudeau, on July 6, 1977, established, by Order in Council, (thereby being able to avoid parliamentary scrutiny) The McDonald Royal Commission of Inquiry Into Certain Activities of the RCMP to counteract and smother the work of Keable. The McDonald Commission became the most expensive Royal Commission in Canadian history, its three Commissioners all closely connected to the Liberal Party. Francis Fox, then federal Minister of Justice, challenged the work of the Keable Commission to limit it and reduce its effectiveness.

The McDonald Commission created a smokescreen over criminal RCMP activities, examining them only in secrecy and without public report. Pierre Trudeau, some speculate, hastened to create the McDonald Commission in order to protect RCMP officers he released into criminal activity, and to protect himself from scrutiny in the matter.

Your cowardice, Mr. Trudeau and Ms. Wilson-Raybould, in the Nuttall/Korody matter threatens justice and the rule of law in Canada. It cannot but appear to be tacit approval of the violence done to law and justice by the RCMP. If the RCMP is not to become a fully licensed criminal organization, you must act to follow upon the findings of Justice Catherine Bruce.

Already many reasonable Canadians believe the country is moving towards the condition of a police state, a belief confirmed again and again when police officers undertaking criminal acts are excused as not subject to laws which non-police citizens are held rigidly subject.

Already many reasonable Canadians believe the country is moving towards the condition of a police state, a belief confirmed again and again when police officers undertaking criminal acts are excused as not subject to laws which non-police citizens are held rigidly subject.

Which of you will say the country is not moving to the condition of a Police State when you, by simple observation, are doing nothing about a large body of RCMP officers, spending millions of dollars over many months, operating from Headquarters in Ottawa and E Division in British Columbia in order to commit crimes under the Terrorism Section of the Criminal Code which carry sentences of life imprisonment? Their months-long inhumane victimization of "impoverished recovering heroin addicts with mental health challenges" only reveals the conscienceless brutality of the RCMP members involved.

To the voting population of Canada, your refusal to act, Mr. Trudeau and Ms. Wilson-Raybould, says all that needs to be said about the government to which you belong and its real intentions for the future of Canadians.

Yours truly
R. D. Mathews
rmathews@telus.net

(1) Barry Zwicker, "Brief to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security."Common Ground, Nov. 2016, pp. 5 and 22.

Liberals hell-bent on Site C Dam

by Ray Eagle

When the Peace River hydro-electric dam system was first conceptualized in the '60s, Site C was seen as just another river section that could provide additional power to augment the Bennett and Peace Canyon dams. There was no recognition of the attributes most now acknowledge: highly productive farmland, First Nations sacred sites, important animal habitat and a scenic rural landscape. There was only a determination by then premier W.A.C. Bennett's Social Credit government to construct the dam; in 1971, BC Hydro began engineering studies.

Interestingly, energy Minister Bill Bennett made a recent admission, saying, "If I looked at it [the Peace] strictly as someone who loves the outdoors, it's a beautiful place… But as somebody charged with the responsibility to help make sure we are meeting our future electricity needs, I also have to look at the valley as a very natural place for another dam."

It was not until November 1983 that BC Hydro went before the British Columbia Utilities Commission (BCUC), then newly created by premier Bill Bennett (W.A.C.'s son). A 315-page summary, while denying the dam's immediate need because of BC Hydro's abysmal forecasting ability, clearly had no concerns about eventual inundation of the valley: "While the Commission recognizes that major impacts will result from Site C, it concludes that they are not so large as to make them unacceptable… the impacts can be successfully and acceptably managed."

BC Hydro was determined not to give up and on September 18, 1989, the *Vancouver Sun* reported, "BC Hydro has stepped up plans to build Site C hydroelectric dam… quietly reviving the multi-billion-dollar project shelved by the Provincial cabinet in 1983… Hydro's move has projected needs, which may or may not be realized."

In fact, it was merely a ramping-up of a state of readiness for when the go-ahead came from the BCUC, but controversy continued to follow the dam. On May 10, 1990, the *Vancouver Sun* reported remarks made by then Energy Minister Jack Davis at an Electric Energy Forum: "Power projects initiated by BC Hydro will be increasingly guided by environmental concerns because of mounting public pressure. We have the scope to be different without building Site C." However, during a 1991 Social Credit party leadership campaign, the winner, Rita Johnston, declared in her policy statement that she wanted to accelerate construction of the '$3 billion' dam. Johnston's leadership was brief because the Socreds were defeated in October of 1991.

Despite these twists and turns, BC Hydro persisted and in the 20 years from 1990 to 2010, its staff worked diligently to keep the dam alive, continuing with advanced engineering studies. Questionnaires were distributed to assess impacts to the socio-economic life of the affected communities, studies were updated on forestry, wildlife, archeological sites and a whole range of issues, especially First Nations' concerns. Public meetings were held and newsletters distributed to inform the citizens of BC

When the 'gung-ho happy face' Christy Clark won the leadership in the May 2013 provincial election, she pushed LNG as the solution to BC's economic woes and claimed Site C was now vital to power LNG plants.

Hydro's intentions, as well as to offer reassurances. It was even stated, "It must be recognized that public involvement requires the provision of information, however incomplete…"

From 1990 to 2010, the public was mostly unaware of BC Hydro's determination as its staff worked diligently to keep the dam alive, including its Northern point-man David Conway.

Through 2007 to 2009, Conway held a series of 'stakeholders' meetings that, again, engaged local people. At an October 20, 2008 meeting he bold-facedly told the assembly, ". . . no decision has been made yet to build the Site C project. We are in a multi-stage approach, regarding Site C as a resource option and are focused on project definition, which includes geotechnical, socio-economic, wildlife, fish studies and consultation."

One of the concerns expressed was shoreline erosion, which, ironically, has recently become a major issue. Also while emphasizing the growing need for power, alternatives were quoted such as Independent Power Producers (IPPs) and wind projects. Conway also mentioned upgrades to both the WAC Bennett and Peace Canyon dams. Surprisingly, he admitted a good potential for geothermal, a concept dismissed by Energy Minister Bennett.

Whether the purpose was to placate the participants or to hide Hydro's intensions, it is obvious that, back in Vancouver, company management and Premier Campbell had a different schedule.

Fast forward to April 19, 2010, when Campbell made his announcement from the W.A.C. Bennett Dam that Site C was on again, now claimed as a 'clean energy project' and "an important part of BC's economic and ecological future." Campbell's ecological reference ignored any mention of the factors that now form today's growing opposition.

Campbell claimed the dam would power 460,000 new homes and repeated the mantra of an increasing power demand of 20 to 40% in the following 20 years.

In 2011, Campbell faced a revolt over the introduction of the Harmonized Sales Tax (HST). It was rescinded, but with a 9% approval rating, on March 19, 2011, he resigned. However, for the wily Campbell, a sinecure awaited from Stephen Harper: that of Canada's High Commissioner to the United Kingdom.

When the 'gung-ho happy face' Christy Clark won the leadership in the May 2013 provincial election, she pushed LNG as the solution to BC's economic woes and claimed Site C was now vital to power LNG plants, Campbell's domestic needs forgotten. Were the voters influenced by the LNG bait? The forecast NDP win disappeared, though Clark lost West Point Grey to NDP's David Eby and had to run in a West Kelowna by-election.

No LNG plants have emerged, though two are planned, perhaps: Prince Rupert's Petronas and Woodfibre. In a recent desperate switch, Clark is now trying to sell Site C power to Alberta.

With her brash style, it is difficult to gauge Clark's popularity, but she faces negative issues such as class-size, twice lost in the courts, the highest child poverty rates in Canada and the evidence of massive funding from the business sector, much of it out-of-province. And her approval of Kinder Morgan, aided by a company financial handout, will certainly raise questions.

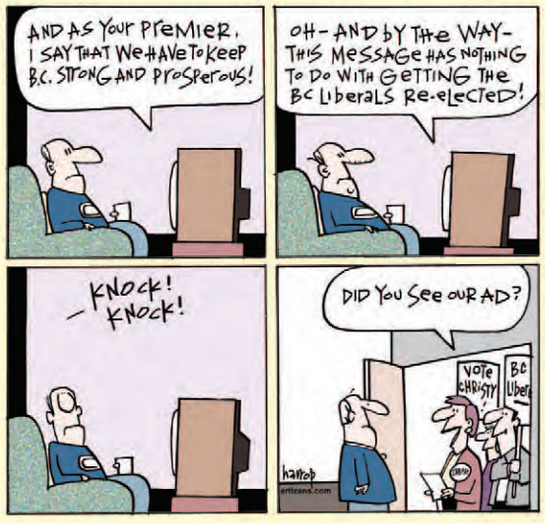
With regards to Site C, Oxford University professor Bent Flyvbjerg has written about politicians' fascination with mega projects, describing the rapture they feel in building monuments: "Mega projects garner attention, which adds to the visibility they gain from them."

This describes Christy Clark and her determination to build Site C while the call to stop it grows stronger, as proven by Peace farmer Ken Boon's daily media bulletins. Approaching the May 9 election, opposition grows stronger (with the recent appearance of a very large white elephant!) in the determination to protect the many vital attributes along this historic river.

Ray Eagle first became aware of Site C in the mid '70s. He has helped fight it through the Wilderness Committee and many published letters in provincial papers. Wilderness Committee: wildernesscommittee.org, 604-683-8220. Contact Ray Eagle by email at r.eagle@telus.net or call 604-922-8507.

BC Liberals' performance through cartoons

Good to remember history when you go to vote May 9th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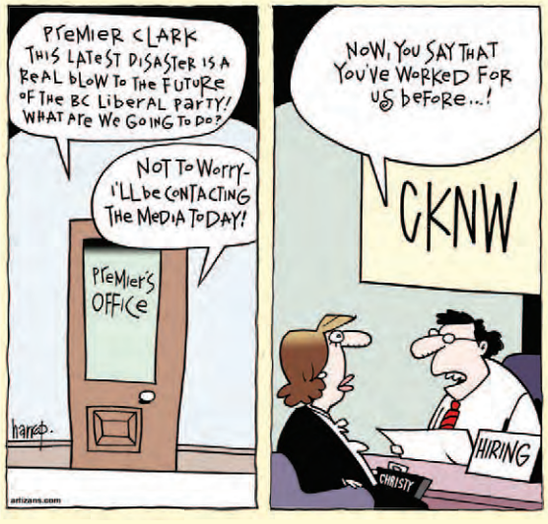
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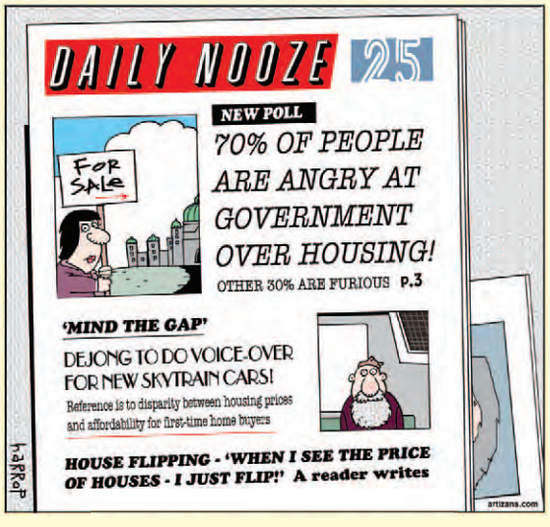
DAILY NOOZE
25
NEW POLL
70% OF PEOPLE ARE ANGRY AT GOVERNMENT OVER HOUSING!
OTHER 30% ARE FURIOUS P.3
FOR SALE
'MIND THE GAP'
DEJONG TO DO VOICE-OVER FOR NEW SKYTRAIN CARS!
Reference is to disparity between housing prices and affordability for first-time home buyers
HOUSE FLIPPING - 'WHEN I SEE THE PRICE OF HOUSES - I JUST FLIP!' A reader writes
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YOU KNOW, CHRISTY, IF WE DON'T DO SOMETHING ABOUT FOREIGN OWNERSHIP AND ITS EFFECT ON YOUNG HOME BUYERS, WE MIGHT LOSE THE NEXT ELECTION! ALL THE SIGNS ARE THERE!
WHAT SIGNS?
PREMIER
FOR SALE
If you got a billion!
DON'T EVEN ASK!
TOO RICH FOR YOUR BLOOD!
TRY RENTING
Good luck with that!
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MIKE - THE NDP IS TRYING TO HACK INTO OUR WEBSITE! WE'VE GOT TO BUILD A FIREWALL!
AND LET MEXICO PAY FOR IT!
FINANCE MINISTER
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